

STORY COUNTY HOUSING STUDY

PREPARED BY RDG PLANNING & DESIGN

5/14/2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The last comprehensive housing needs assessment conducted by Story County was compiled in July 1998. Much changed in the past 20 years. The Story County Housing Study stems from the initiative of leaders and residents in Story County recognizing these changes and the need for a strategy forward.

The study provides an in-depth analysis of the current and future needs for affordable, workforce, and other housing options to bridge gaps in housing demand and supply. Each strategy in the study is tied to a wealth of information which forms a picture of Story County's housing market today. The information includes qualitative and quantitative sources to analyze factors for each individual community in Story County, except for Ames, and for the unincorporated areas in the County. The strategies recognize the influence of Ames on the county's other communities.

COUNTY ROLE

Be a facilitator of stakeholders/organizations/cities and direct housing development strategies toward the study's goals for attainable housing. Listen to the recommendations and efforts of city and county staff and committees implementing the study. Adopt policy, programs, and funding to support the identified housing needs. Work closely with cities to align efforts where possible to meet the goals and intentions in the study.

LOCAL COMMITTEE ROLE

A housing committee may be warranted to refine and detail the steps for implementing the strategies in this study. The committee could empower local action on the strategies that fit city contexts and have a plan for continuing efforts in the future. Lastly, they could advocate for residents and sectors of the housing market in the county.

CITIZEN ROLE

Seek to understand the housing needs and challenges of all different people and

circumstances in your community and advocate for housing that meets these needs. Get involved with the community efforts.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a summary of issues and opportunities facing Story County communities. The summary comes from housing, demographic, and economic data for the County and conversations with Story County stakeholders. In summary, the issues and opportunities identified include:

Issues to Overcome:

- Locational benefits and drawbacks
- Limited options for first-time homebuyers
- Available land for housing
- Transportation between communities
- External economic conditions
- Hidden housing burden
- Other costs adding up
- Technology for the modern age



Opportunities to Leverage:

- High-quality housing stock
- Demand for rentals at all price points
- Highly respected communities and schools
- Active developers
- Many services for the underserved
- Demand for new housing

CHAPTER 2: MARKET ATLAS

The market atlas builds on a review of previous reports, an assortment of data, and regional influences on the market. A thorough understanding of demographics and housing conditions provide the first steps in crafting the housing study. Summary points, excluding Ames, include:

- Ames contributes to 68.5% of the county wide population and has grown in its share of the total population from 63.6% since 1990.
- Communities closest to Ames are growing at a faster rate than other cities, especially on the southern end of Story County.
- The Hispanic or Latino population in every city

not including Ames is below 7%, compared to 18.4% in the nation and 6.3% in Iowa.

- Nearly all communities are growing except for Zearing, an indication that people are looking at housing options across Story County.
- There was a large movement of families into Story County cities since 2000, indicated by the overall change in the 0-14 age cohort and 35-44 age cohort.
- The unemployment rate rose to as high as 8.5% in April of 2020 and, at the time of this study, had fallen to 1.9% in November of 2020.
- Through 2028, the Iowa Department of Workforce Development forecasts a 9.9% change in employment across all non-agricultural industries in the Des Moines Area region. Industries of largest growth are those that tend to pay lower but are essential for functional communities. Attainable housing options are crucial to ensure sustainable quality of life for these employees.
- More people travel to Story County for work than leave Story County for work each day. It is often that one spouse may work in Story County, and the other may work in Polk County.

- MLS data indicates the average price for residential land between 2017 and 2019 ranging from \$69,000 to \$99,000 per acre. However, this does not indicate the average size of land sold.
- County wide, excluding Ames, owner-occupied housing is stable at around 78% of all housing units. This is common for rural communities but does not adequately meet the needs of many households that need or would like to rent.
- Construction since 2009 consisted mostly of single-family dwellings at about 85% of all new construction in Story County, excluding Ames. About one-third of all construction was in Huxley.
- After conducting driving tours of each city, there is little evidence of widespread deteriorated housing conditions.
- Those with lower household incomes that must rent faced a significant increase in rent since 2010. Some cities saw increases in median rent by over 30%.
- Many essential worker jobs do not pay enough for a person to reasonably afford to purchase a home with savings for a 10% downpayment.



CHAPTER 3: QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

The study seeks to support the development of a housing market that is reflective of the diverse community of residents that makes up the County. In this way, the process included a variety of stakeholders representing a broad cross section of housing providers and those looking for housing. Chapter 3 provides a summary of these conversations as well as the results of a county wide survey. Summary points include:

- Disagreements in responsibility between rural and urban utility services, especially water service for annexed land.
- The presence of student oriented housing in Ames influences the entire county. The higher prices of rental options in Ames forces many out of the Ames market to search in other communities. Thus, rental supply is low to non-existent in many Story County communities.
- Transitional and group home housing is secluded to Ames by necessity. Ames has services that the patrons of these housing types need. Rather, the focus might be better applied to creating adequate transportation options outside of Ames. Thus, people without cars could live in other cities if transitional housing is constructed.

- There is trouble for specific households to get into the market because of past credit history or landlords not accepting vouchers.
- Discussions with Realtors indicate a quality home priced between \$150,000 to \$200,000 will sell in a matter of days or less.
- Discussions with Realtors and developers indicate that new construction is difficult to build in Story County under \$225,000.
- Seasonal workers and multi-generational families have the fewest housing options as felt by well under 50% of survey respondents.
- Survey respondents felt a prominent undersupply of any rental priced below \$1,000 a month.
- Any home under \$200,000 is felt to be significantly undersupplied.
- Respondents are supportive of several programs to maintain and improve the existing housing stock, with removing dilapidated housing and rehabilitation or renovations with public funding ranking the highest.

CHAPTER 4: OUR NEEDS

As a result of the market atlas and qualitative insights, this chapter provides a forecast for population and housing needs by price point.

- Recent construction activity, historical growth rates, location, and market conditions indicate that a 0.8% annual growth rate is a feasible forecast for Story County when excluding Ames.
 - › Under this forecast, areas in Story County not including Ames would see a 2040 population of 36,881.
- For those over 55, the greatest growth will occur in the 65-74 years old cohort.
- For the market to support new growth and offer variety in the market, approximately 1,375 new housing units are needed to meet demand through 2030 and 2,958 through 2040.
 - › The demand equals about 148 new units annually, including both renter and owner units, compared to current building activity since 2010, at about 103 units per year.
- Aggregate new housing should target a ratio of 60% owner-occupied, 40% renter-occupied split.



CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC MARKET APPROACH

The following is a summary of the goals in this chapter and a table of implementation priorities.

- OVERARCHING GOAL 1: Share risks with the private market when appropriate
- GOAL 2: Create a supply of affordable lots
- GOAL 3: Grow rental units for all age groups
- GOAL 4: Foster grassroots efforts
- GOAL 5: Proactively preserve the existing housing stock
- GOAL 6: Maintain Fair Zoning and Regulations

Figure 5.3: Implementation Schedule

TOOLS	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Story County Housing Trust Fund	Short/on-going	Cities/County, Non-Profit Developer, Banking Community, Development Group
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Lending Consortium	Medium	Chambers, Banking Community, Trust Fund, Multiple other partners
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Major employers	Short/on-going	Chambers, Employers
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Realtors, builders and developers	Short/on-going	Realtors, Builders, Cities, County
G1: Non-Profit: Development of a Non-Profit Developer	Long for new organization	County, Cities, Economic Development Groups
G1: Land Assembly: Development-oriented local landowners to solidify legacy project	On-going as arises	Cities, County, Realtors, Property Owners
G1: Land Assembly: Reuse of surplus public lands or sites	Long	Cities, County
G1: Land Assembly: Assemble infill opportunities	Medium	Cities, County, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G2: Special assessments	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Subordinate payments	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Deferred payment	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Land Assembly: Direct lot development	Medium	Cities, County, Trust Fund, Non-Profit Developer, Property Owners
G2: Land Assembly: Long-term investment, budget annually	Short	Cities, County
G3: Leverage risk sharing tools with product requirements	Project specific	Cities, County, Banking Community, Trust Fund
G3: Downtown/commercial building reuse	Medium	Cities, Property Owners
G3: Pre-packaged site plans/RFPs: Show what will get approved, reduce soft costs	Medium to Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Builders and Developers
G3: Pre-packaged site plans/RFPs: Product Demonstration	Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G4: Code enforcement, share resources	Medium/on-going	Cities, County
G4: Invest in neighborhood pride	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Groups
G4: Market existing programs: Regular communication notices	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Group, Realtors
G4: New rehab programs for both rental (landlords) and owner	Medium	Cities, County, Trust Fund
G4: Market existing programs: Create a database of all programs	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Other partners
G5: Housing advocates	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Groups, Chambers, Residents
G5: Recruitment, skilled trades "residency"	Long	Chambers, Economic Development Groups
G5: Pre-packaged site plans and RFPs	Medium to Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G6: Update land use plans	Medium	Cities, County
G6: Broaden residential permitted uses under certain contexts and design standards	Short	Cities, County, Builders and Developers
G6: Evaluate reductions in lot sizes, setbacks	Short	Cities, County, Builders and Developers



INTRODUCTION

REASON FOR A PLAN

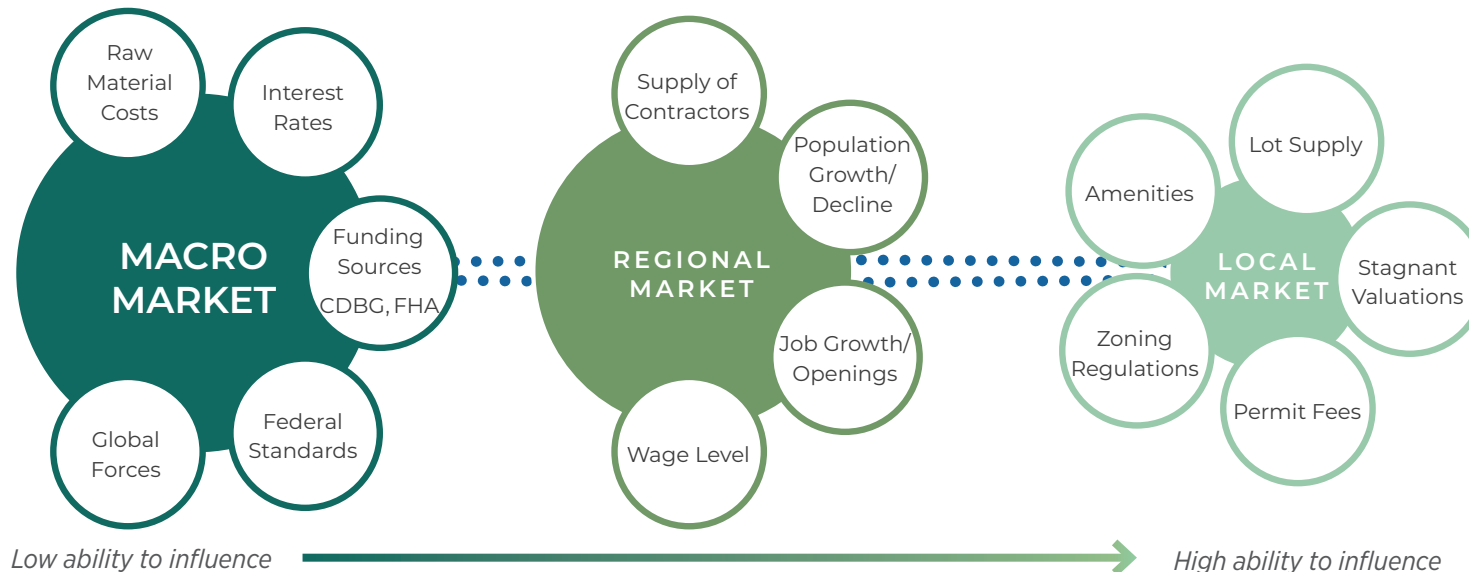
Housing impacts the quality of life for residents in Story County, for people interested in moving to the area, and for businesses seeking to recruit (and retain) employees. Through community engagement, interviews, community tours, and market analysis, a housing assessment identifies the market gaps and strategies to meet the housing needs of various households.

In Story County, the impetus for a housing study stems from high housing demand, low inventory, and a low supply of new homes all contributing to high housing costs. The data and information in this study identify several issues to overcome and opportunities to leverage, understanding that Story County policies can have the most influence in the local market (Figure 1.1).

Issues to Overcome:

- **Locational benefits and drawbacks.** Proximity to a large metropolitan area, many employment opportunities, and a variety of amenities are excellent for people that live in Story County. However, the attractions that draw people to live in Story County are drivers of housing competition and higher market prices.
- **Limited options for first-time homebuyers.** Homeownership is not for everyone. However, many people want to buy a home but are restricted by available options that meet their price point, which is generally below \$200,000. As a result, people are renting for longer than they would like to or moving to another region that allows them to buy a home.
- **Available land for housing.** It may seem there is abundant land for housing in Story County. However, several barriers limit housing development as a profitable endeavor. One is the lack of willingness to sell by existing landowners (at market prices). Another is the transition of rural to urban utility services. As discussed later, water service between rural and urban areas is a significant barrier that must be overcome.
- **Transportation between communities.** Housing and transportation are reliant on each other. Many times, one is attainable but not the other. For Story County, there are not many transportation options outside of Ames for household without a car. However, services that lower-income households need are mostly in Ames, where housing costs are much higher than in other areas in Story County.

Figure 1.1: Potential Forces on Housing Development and Investment



- **External economic conditions.** Regions across Iowa and the Midwest face similar economic challenges that are not a result of a community's doing or influence. Increasing lumber costs, supply-chain delays, and potential impacts of the 2020 pandemic are all items mostly out of local control but with significant effects on housing and household conditions.
- **Hidden housing burden.** Many do not realize the effects that housing prices have already taken on many households in Story County. Homelessness is present, even though many homeless have jobs. The cost of rent and other essential needs is high enough to price some households out of reliable options. These populations are increasing in Story County.
- **Other costs adding up.** Housing is typically the highest regular expense for a household. However, the cost of other necessities affects the price that can be spent on housing. For families, childcare, transportation, and school costs are a non-negotiable barrier to attainable housing options. Reducing these costs can increase attainable housing options.
- **Technology for the modern age.** Even before the pandemic, more people started working from home and student homework required more online presence. While not directly related to housing attainability, quality and reliable Internet access is a quality of life feature at the top of many people's lists but is also quickly becoming a necessity.

Opportunities to Leverage:

- **High-quality housing stock.** Unlike many counties in Iowa, existing housing in Story County is mostly well-kept with few areas, if any, of concentrated dilapidation. This is an excellent quality because existing homes will be the most affordable options in Story County.
- **Demand for rentals at all price points.** Setting Ames aside, there is demand and need for rental housing across many price points. People moving to Story County will often need to rent first, and some must rent by necessity.
- **Highly respected communities and schools.** Growth in Story County outside of Ames is partially a product of the great school systems. Not only the schools, but communities in Story County also have many amenities that people desire and factor when choosing where to live.
- **Active developers.** Fortunately, Story County has interest from builders and developers. The proximity to Des Moines opens a large pool of people to undertake housing development. Another positive trend is local community members getting involved in housing development. Local investors are crucial to bring smaller scale products to local markets where a larger developer may not pursue smaller profit margins.
- **Many services for the underserved.** Ames provides many benefits for those that need special services as a result of income, mental health, or medical conditions. These are needed services that require additional support. However, as mentioned as an issue, there needs to be transportation to these services or more dispersion of services throughout Story County.

- **Demand for new housing.** There is not only demand from people that want to live in Story County, but many people living in Story County would like to move into new housing. From the community survey, over 30% of people living in Story County today would like to move from rental housing to an owner-occupied home or move from their existing home to a larger home.

A Note on Pandemic Influences...

The housing assessment occurred during uncertain circumstances in the second half of 2020. The assessment notes the potential short-term effects of a recession where applicable, an economic situation that was still fluid at the time of this document. Indicators at the end of 2020 had yet to reveal severe impacts on the housing market. However, rising housing construction costs partially attributed to the pandemic were prevalent. The next chapter provides detailed market data and potential pandemic and recession-related implications.



MARKET ATLAS

INTRODUCTION

The current state of Story County today – its historical trends, population demographics, economy, and conditions of the housing market – forms an understanding of current challenges, forecasts future needs, and helps articulate a program to improve the local housing market. While market conditions are not static, many metrics can point to effects on the housing market in the future.

What quantifiable data can tell us

Communities today are fortunate to have a wealth of data to inform decision making. Data for Story County informs recommendations through:

- **Trends.** What happened in the past under various market and economic conditions.
- **Ability.** How the ability for residents to pay for housing compares under past conditions and compared to similar counties. Why did the ability change positively or negatively?
- **Market Value.** The change in prices paid for housing compared to the change in housing supply. One indication of the demand for living in Story County and how many additional housing units could help balance demand.

Definitions

There are many terms used to discuss housing needs and describe actions. Below are common terms used throughout the study to describe certain situations, conditions, or intended actions.

Move-up Housing. The natural cycle of how people move in the housing market, referring to the process of moving from renting to mid-sized owner-occupancy to larger single-family homes. The “move-up” generally occurs with income increases, assuming adequate housing supply and variety is available, opening more affordable housing options for others. Recent trends may not indicate that “move-up” housing means square footage, but it may mean better finishes or more amenities that add value to a home.

Cost Burdened. The household spends $\geq 30\%$ of HUD Area Median Income on housing.

Cost Burdened, Extremely. The household spends 30% to 50% of HUD Area Median Income on housing.

Cost Burdened, Severely. The household spends $> 50\%$ of HUD Area Median Income on housing.

Empty Nester. A single or couple without children living at home. Empty nesters can include any age range but most often refers to older adults and seniors whose children have moved on and no longer live at home.

Affordable Housing. For purposes of this study rental housing is affordable when the rent does not exceed 30% of a household’s gross income.

Owner-occupied housing is affordable when the housing payment (mortgage, insurance, HOA, etc.) does not exceed 33% of a household’s gross income.

Assisted Housing. In the context of this study, assisted housing is defined and refers to housing that caters to those that want or need additional services. This could include provided meals, cleaning services, shared maintenance, and other similar accommodations. Often the term is used to refer to older adults that live independently well after retirement.

Attainable Housing. Any housing that is not financially burdensome to a household in a specific income range. Housing in terms of being subsidized by Federal programs and “affordable housing” can be included in this definition.

Leverage. Describes engaged partner organizations (financial, organizational, and human capital) to enable a more significant outcome or gain access to additional funds such as grants by pledging local resources.

Gap Financing. Funding used to turn a potential project from losing profit to breaking even or making a profit. Often this refers to an incentive to make a project worthwhile for a developer.

Mixed-Use. Mixed use districts are areas with two or more different uses such as residential, office, retail, and civic in a compact urban form. Typical residential uses in a mixed use district range from medium density to very high density uses. The uses can be in the same building or in different building in the same development project site.

BENCHMARKING

Comparisons to peer counties provides a baseline to evaluate whether conditions in Story County are significantly different from other regions. While each comparison county is like Story County in one way or another, every community ultimately has a unique set of circumstances that set it apart from every other. Nonetheless, differences in conditions can help indicate localized issues or assets for Story County. The comparison counties include:

Riley County, Kansas (population 73,703)

Similarities

- Home of Kansas State University
- The student population makes up a large portion of Manhattan
- Along a major interstate

Differences

- More rural and isolated from urban areas
- More moderate growth

Lancaster County, Nebraska (population 319,000)

Similarities

- Home of the University of Nebraska
- Along major interstate
- Part of a large commuting region

Differences

- Larger population and growth rate
- The University does not have as much influence on county growth



Johnson County, Iowa (population 151,140)

Similarities

- Home of the University of Iowa
- The student population makes up a large portion of Iowa City
- Along a major interstate
- Located in Iowa with the same state statutes and housing programs
- Commuting distance to a larger city area (Cedar Rapids)
- Many smaller but rapidly growing cities

Differences

- More urbanized and populated
- More environmental constraints
- Faster growing



Monroe County, Indiana (population 148,431)

Similarities

- Home of Indiana University
- Similar growth rate
- The student population makes up a large portion of Bloomington
- Along a major interstate
- Many smaller cities

Differences

- More environmental barriers to growth
- Not near another larger metropolitan area

MARKET INDICATORS

Many factors shape the housing market in Story County today.

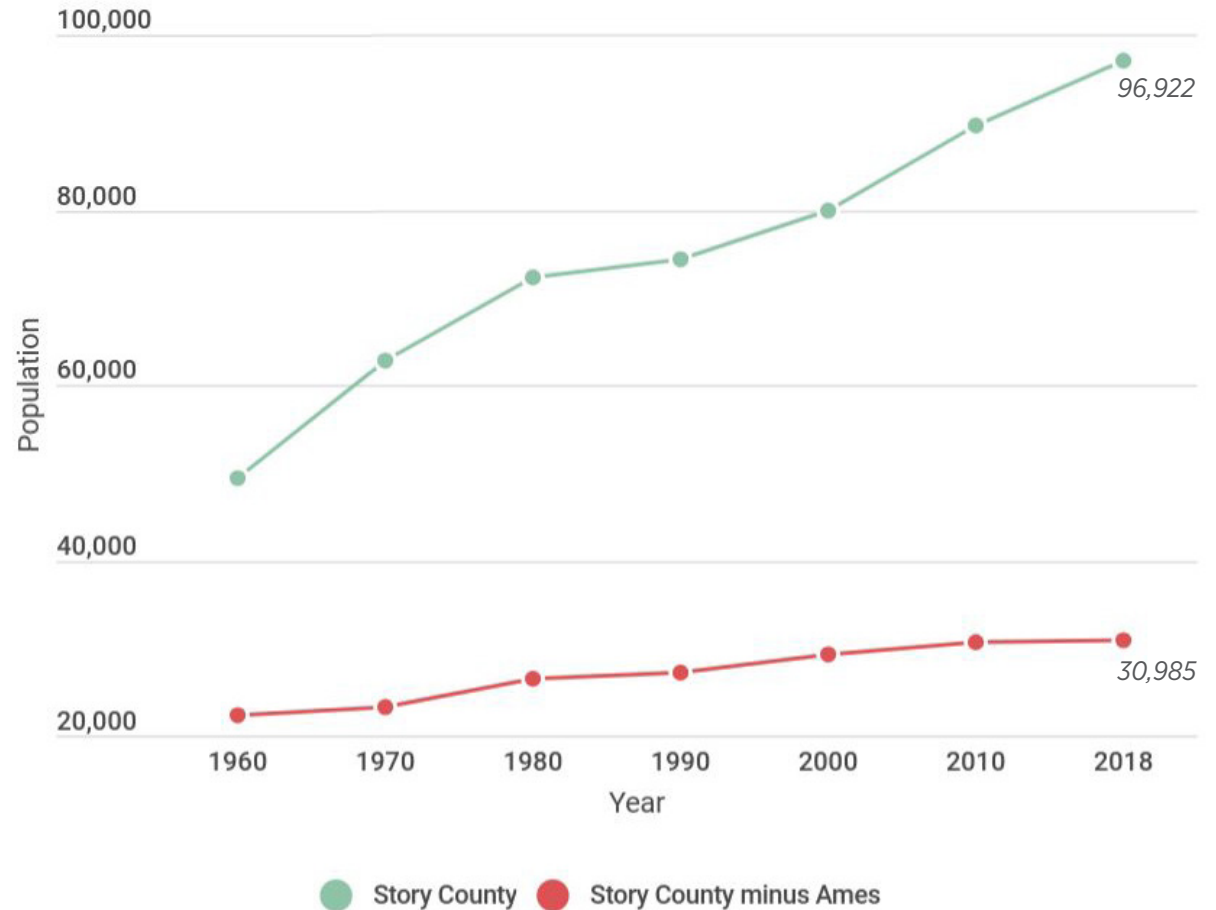
Population Changes

Increases in the population without a similar increase in housing construction will lead to a lower inventory of available homes (unless the population increase is from larger households). More people will choose homes that do not fit their needs or desires or live elsewhere. The price of housing may rise significantly as competition increases for available housing.

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the historical population change in Story County and by community.

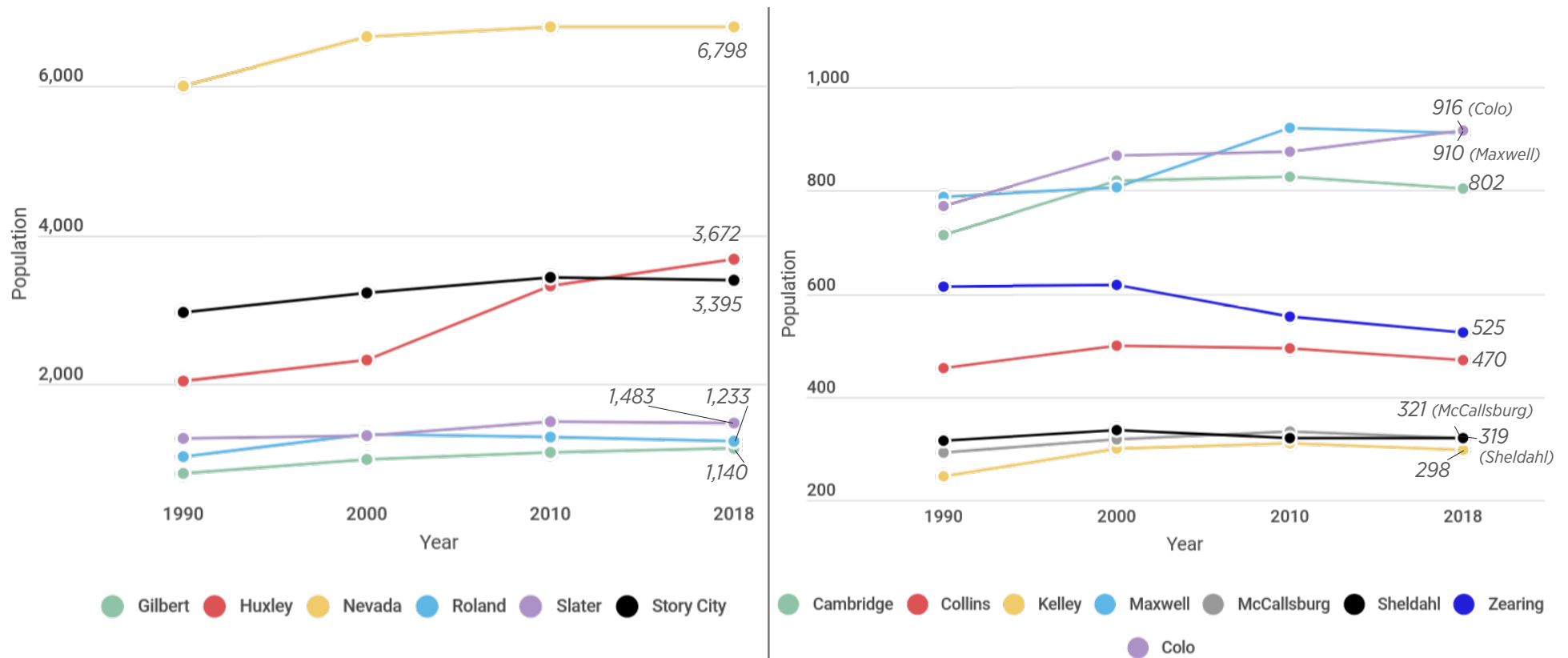
- Ames contributes to 68.5% of the county wide population and has grown in its share of the total population from 63.6% since 1990.

Figure 2.1: Historical Population Change



Source: U.S. Census; American Community Survey 2014-2018

Figure 2.1: Historical Population Change



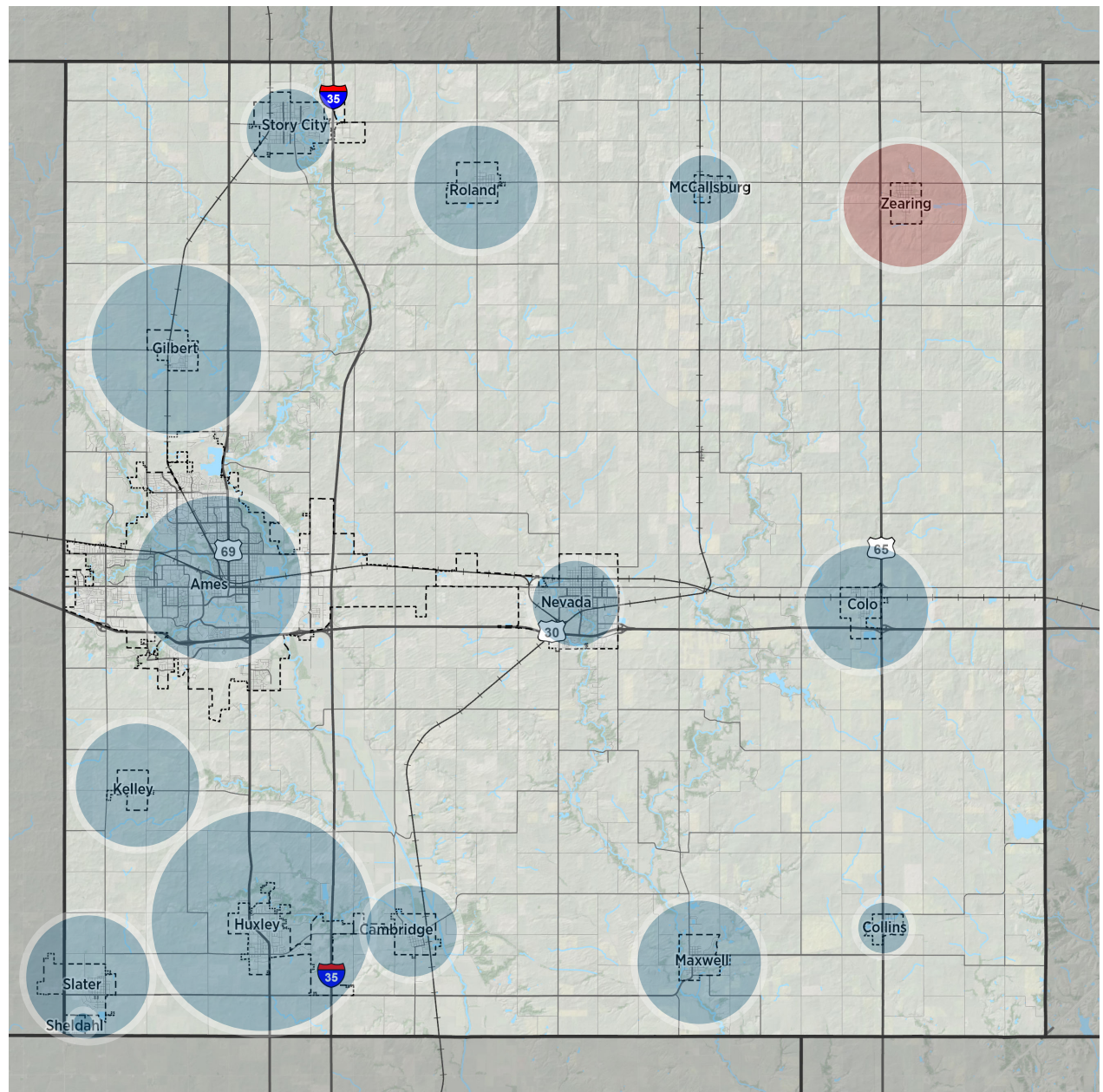
Source: U.S. Census; Census Population Estimates Program

- Communities closest to Ames are growing at a faster rate than other cities, especially on the southern end of Story County.

OUR NEEDS

- Nearly all communities are growing except for Zearing, an indication that people are looking at housing options across Story County.

Figure 2.2: Percent Population Change, 1990-2018 (blue = growth; red = decline)



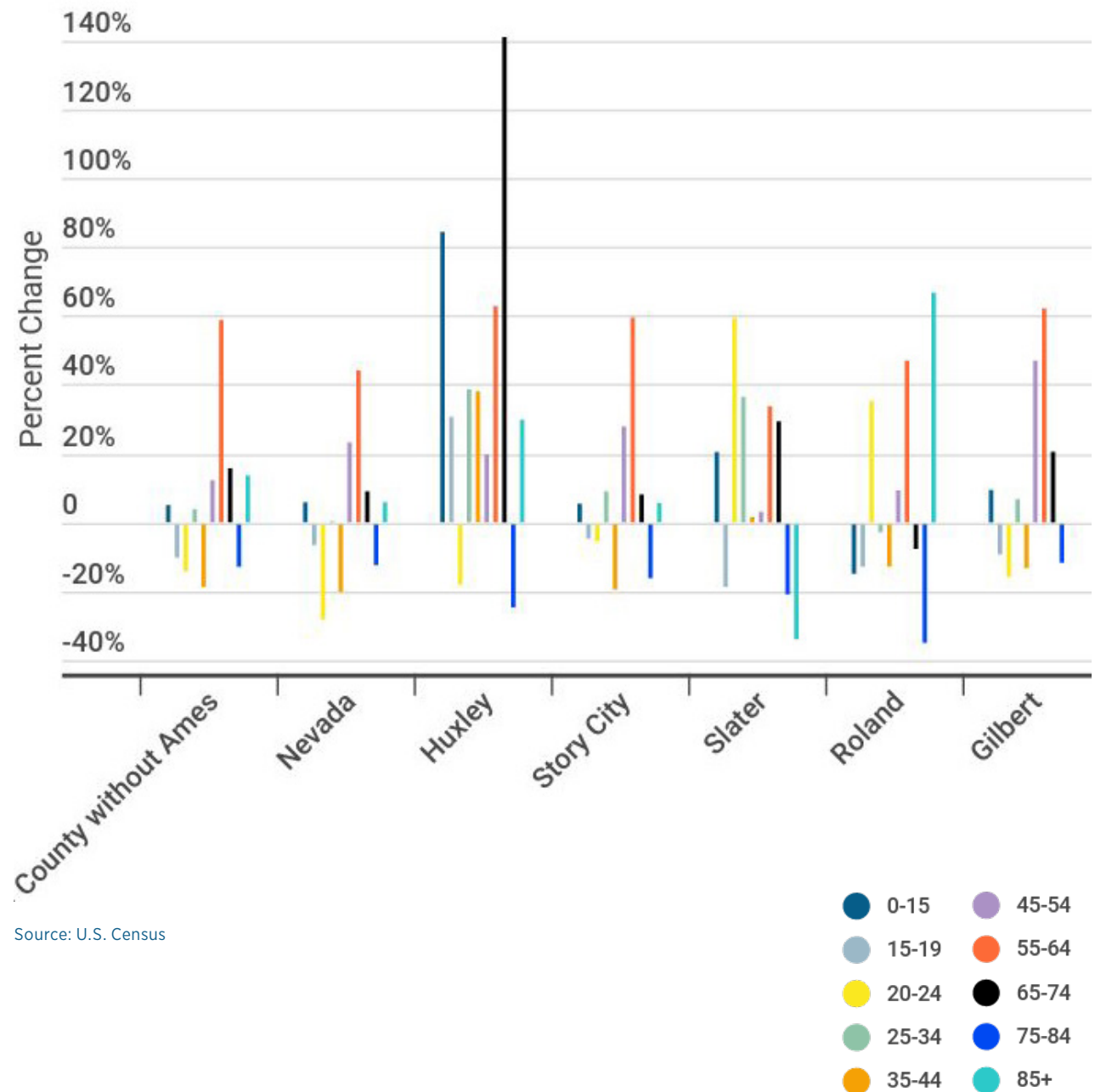
Source: U.S. Census; 2014-2018 American Community Survey

Demographics

Changes in the demographics of people living in Story County help indicate housing needs today and in the future. For example, as the baby boomer population continues to age, there become additional needs for elderly housing. If elderly housing is provided, new opportunities for entry-level housing opens as older households move out of homes.

Figure 2.3 shows the change among age cohorts between 2000-2010 for cities with more than 1,000 people in Story County.

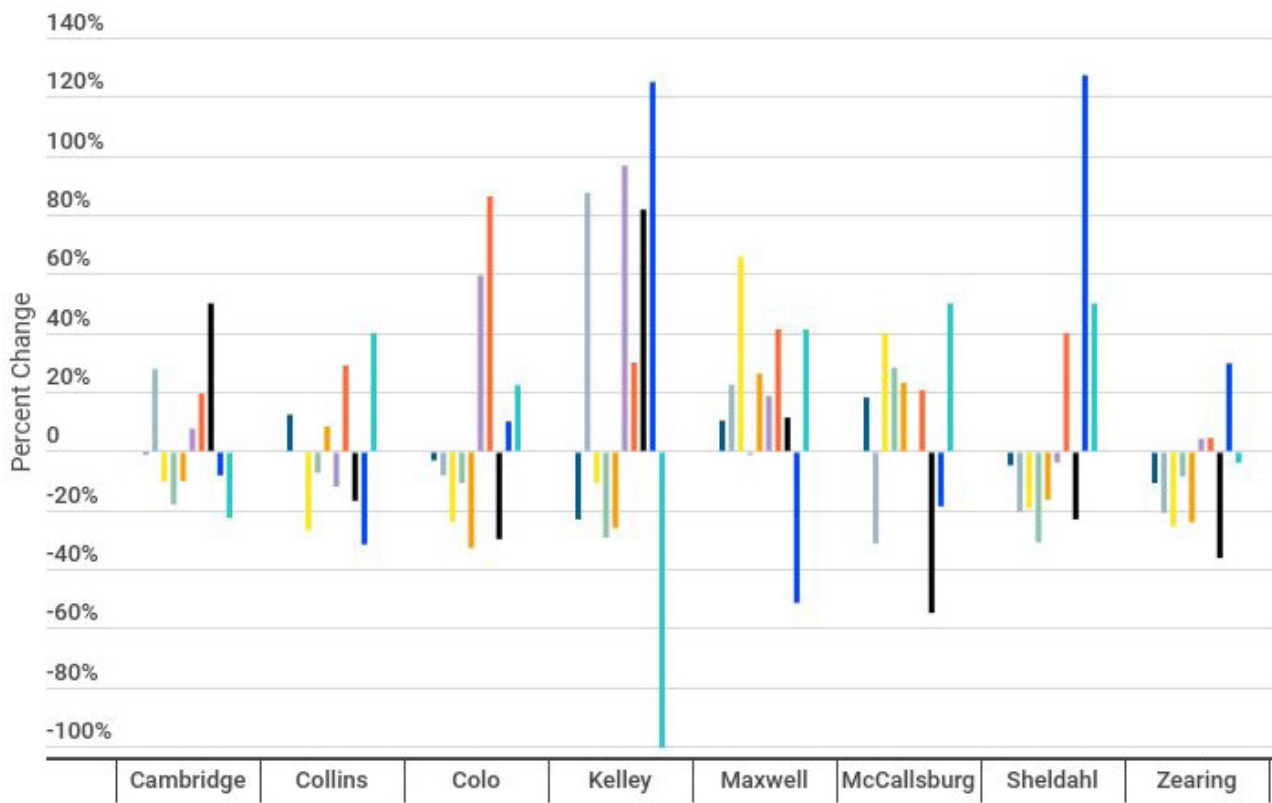
Figure 2.3: Age Cohort Percent Change (larger cities), 2000-2010



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2.4 shows the change among age cohorts between 2000-2010 for cities with less than 1,000 people in Story County. Like the larger cities in Story County, age cohort population changes vary by community and within age groups. All cities had increases in age cohorts reaching retirement.

Figure 2.4: Age Cohort Percent Change (smaller cities), 2000-2010



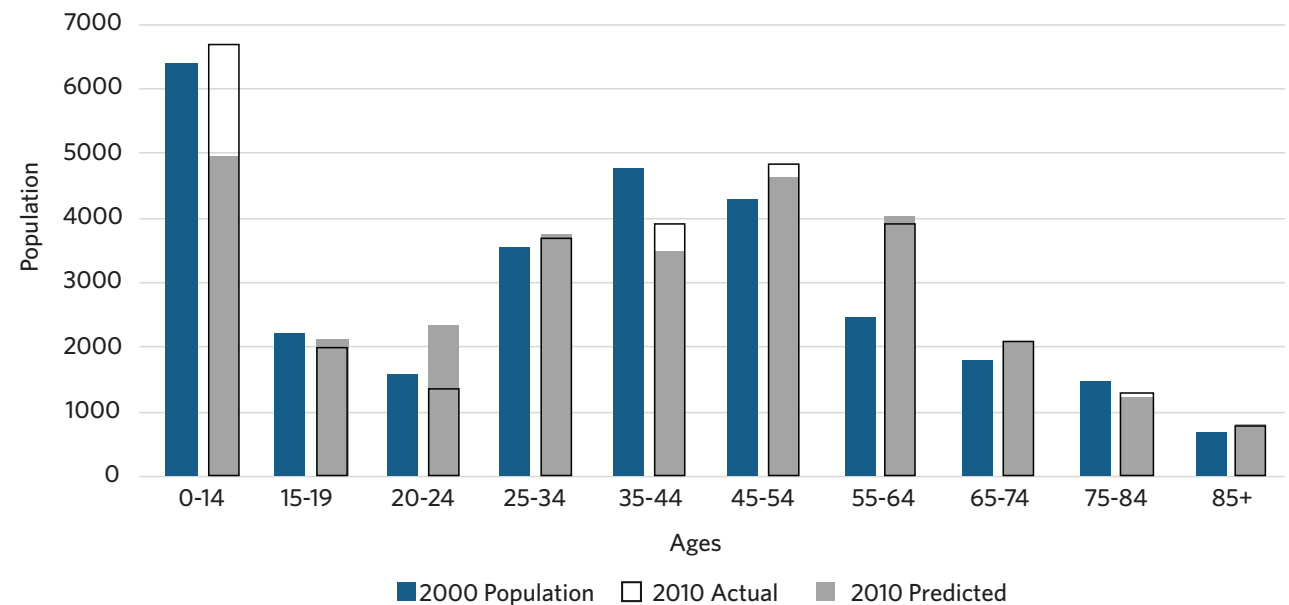
Source: U.S. Census

- 0-15
- 15-19
- 20-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75-84
- 85+

Figure 2.5 relates the changes in age cohorts to what would be expected under a natural birth and death situation with no moving in and out of Story County residents. A difference from the natural rate of population change indicates the in-migration or out-migration of residents. The figure excludes Ames.

- There was a large movement of families into Story County cities since 2000, indicated by the overall change in the 0-14 age cohort and 35-44 age cohort.
- The out-migration of people in the 20-24 age cohort is expected as many students leave for college or their first job.
- Empty-nester and retiree age cohorts remain predictable with no significant in- or out-migration on an aggregate basis.
- The change in age make-up varies quite a bit by city (not shown on the figure). Huxley and Slater grew much more through the in-migration of new families and school-aged children. However, they also grew more by proportion than other cities in newly retired households.

Figure 2.5: Story County Predicted Versus Actual Population (2010), excluding Ames



Source: U.S. Census; RDG Planning & Design

From a diversity standpoint, Ames is the most diverse, although not as diverse as many other university cities. The increased diversity from Story County is understandable from the student population at Iowa State University and associated research and teaching programs. However, there is no significant diversity from the University that filters into the rest of Story County.

- Every city in Story County other than Ames has a resident population that is over 92% white.
- The Hispanic or Latino population in every city not including Ames is below 7%, compared to 18.4% in the nation and 6.3% in Iowa.

Employment Types and Changes

The 2020 pandemic created quick and drastic changes in the employment characteristics in Story County. The unemployment rate rose to as high as 8.5% in April of 2020 and, at the time of this study, had fallen to 1.9% in November of 2020. However, some of the decline is attributed to people who are unemployed but have stopped looking for work. These people are not counted in unemployment figures.

Pre-pandemic, the unemployment rate averaged 1.9% in 2019. (Source: BLS). It is not currently clear whether unemployment will be stable through 2021 or whether the longer-term impact of the pandemic will lead to long-term unemployment. Nonetheless, uncertainty in employment increases the demand for rental housing and housing at lower price points. Uncertainty also decreases movement in the housing market.

Figure 2.6 shows the breakdown of employment industries for Story County residents, excluding Ames.

- Educational services are a large driver for people to live in Story County. As such, many people that live outside of Ames work in educational services, and health care and social assistance.
- The second-largest employment industry is manufacturing, indicative of the many industrial uses along Interstate 35.
- These employment characteristics indicate the varying needs of housing price points to match wage levels and why many people may choose to live in other cities in Story County other than Ames.

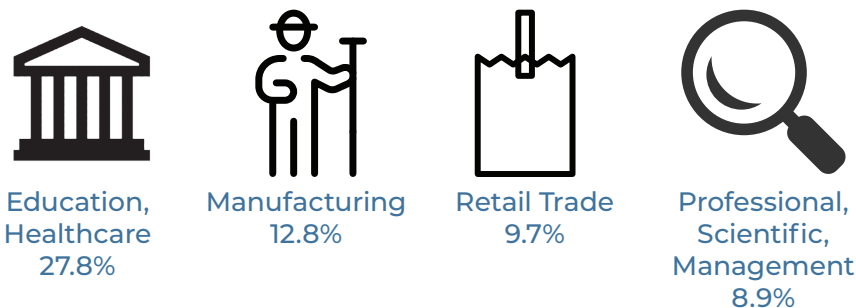
Employment Forecast

Housing is affected by economic growth in the region. The Iowa Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) provides data on regional occupation and industry growth. Story County falls within the Des Moines area region. Through 2028, IDWD forecasts a 9.9% change in employment across all non-agricultural industries. Figure 2.7 shows the magnitude of employment industries through 2028. The highest employment growth by number is forecast in:

- Ambulatory Health Care Services (5,155)
- Educational Services (4,740)
- Administrative and Support Services (4,320)
- Insurance Carriers, Related Activities (4,010)
- Food Services and Drinking Places (2,955)

These industries tend to pay lower but are essential for functional communities. Attainable housing options are crucial to ensure sustainable quality of life for these employees.

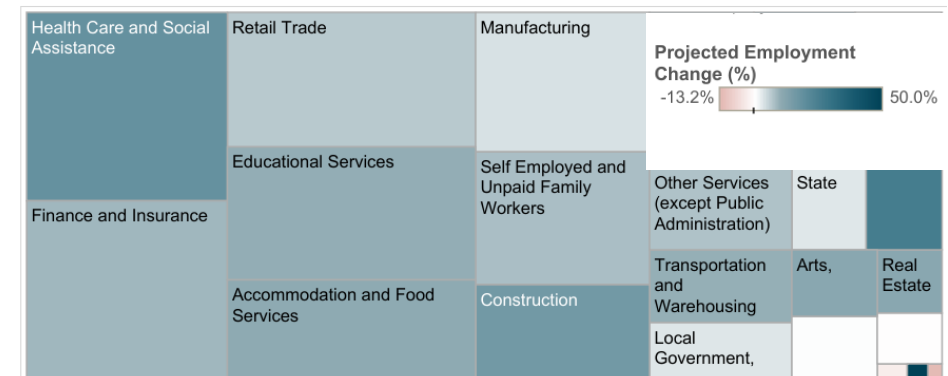
Figure 2.6: Top Employment Industries (2018), excluding Ames



Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018

Figure 2.7: Long-Term (2018-2028) Des Moines Area Industry Sector Size

Size of box relative to the employment level for that industry sector



Source: Iowa Department of Workforce Development

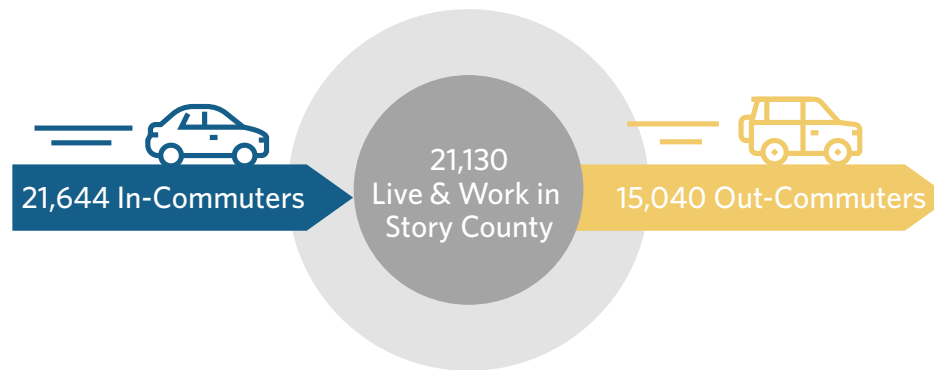
Local and Regional Transportation

A common theme among resident comments and discussions was the commuting benefits of living in Story County. Residents have easy access to Interstate 35 and employment centers in Ankeny and Ames. Figure 2.8 illustrates the aggregate commuting in and out of Story County. Figure 2.9 shows where these commuters come from.

- More people travel to Story County for work than leave Story County for work each day. With the proximity to many employment destinations, it is often that one spouse may work in Story County, and the other may work in Polk County.
- Many of the residents that commute outside of Story County for work travel to the Des Moines metropolitan area. A decent portion also travels west to the Boone area and east to Marshalltown.

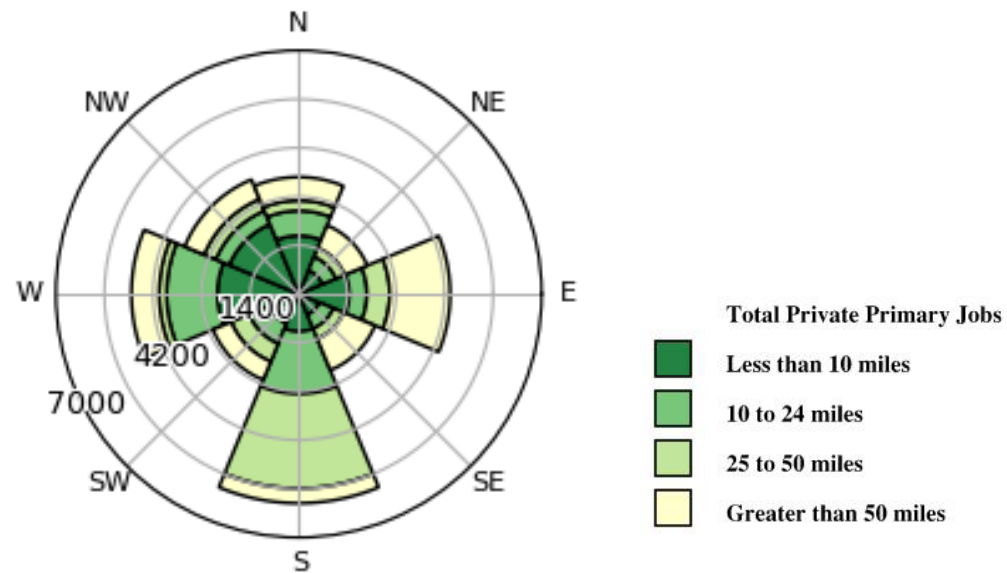
In 2020, these commuting patterns are significantly different. Although there is no widespread data on the commuting effects of the pandemic, many office and professional service companies in the region implemented work from home policies. Should the work from home trial in 2020 prove efficient and cost saving for companies, there may be a much higher percentage of home offices. This makes small-town areas in Story County more appealing to many families because of lower housing costs, if reliable broadband is available.

Figure 2.8: Inflow-Outflow of Story County Workforce (2017)



Source: Census On the Map, 2017

Figure 2.9: Employee Home Destination and Distance (2018)



Source: Census On the Map, 2018

2018

Count	Share
Total Private Primary Jobs	29,296 100.0%
Less than 10 miles	11,029 37.6%
10 to 24 miles	6,375 21.8%
25 to 50 miles	5,402 18.4%
Greater than 50 miles	6,490 22.2%

Material and Land Costs

Raw materials and the cost of land are most times the highest costs of new housing. Fluctuations in the price of materials can unexpectedly increase the cost of housing development. Land prices also fluctuate depending on the ability to serve with utilities, the previous use of the land, and an existing landowner's willingness to sell.

Data obtained from Zillow in October 2020, discussions with local Realtors and developers, and MLS data show:

- The average price for a 0.25 acre lot in October 2020 is around \$50,000 to \$80,000.
- Most lots listed available on Zillow are larger than 0.25 acres or roughly 11,000 square feet. This large lot size makes it difficult to build any home under \$250,000.
- MLS data indicates the average price for residential land between 2017 and 2019 ranging from \$69,000 to \$99,000. However, this does not indicate the average size of land sold.

Discussions with Realtors and developers indicate that new construction is difficult to build in Story County under \$225,000. Much of this is because of high material and labor costs. Methods to reduce the costs of new construction will need to focus on lot sizes, infrastructure costs, home size, and type, and even then, public incentives may still be needed to lower sales prices.

Figure 2.10: Producer Price Index of Softwood Lumber



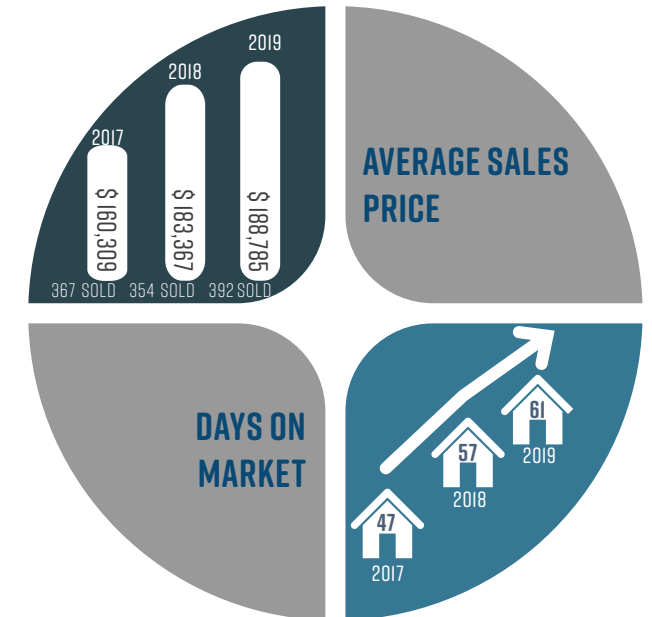
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics; FRED

Figure 2.11: Single Family Home Sales, Story County excluding Ames

Sales Trends

The frequency of home sales shows the level of movement in the housing market and price ranges of newly constructed homes. Additionally, the length of time it takes to sell a home or lease a rental unit shows the level of demand for housing in the local market.

Figure 2.11 shows that home sales prices outside of Ames are increasing, seeing a large increase from 2017 to 2018. The number of homes selling are also increasing but with longer days homes are on the market. However, the longer days on market are likely the result of unique homes or those in low quality left on the market. Discussions with Realtors indicate a quality home priced between \$150,000 to \$200,000 will sell in a matter of days or less.



Source: Multiple Listings Service (2017-2019)

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Positive market indicators can lead to additional growth if adequate housing is available. By examining the characteristics of housing today in Story County, it is possible to understand the implications that market indicators have on housing. Then policies can target indicators to meet the need of current and future residents in Story County.

Occupancy

A mix of rental and owner-occupied units creates balance and affordability in the market and accommodates various preferences. A market dominated by one housing type excludes the possibilities for different age and income groups to live in the community. **Figure 2.12** shows the split of owner and renter-occupied housing over time.

- County wide, excluding Ames, owner-occupied housing is stable at around 78% of all housing units. This is common for rural communities but does not adequately meet the needs of many households that need or would like to rent.
- Story City has the lowest ratio of owner-occupied housing, or rather, the highest amount of renter-occupied housing. At between 66-69% owner-occupied housing, there is a good ratio of renter options, although several complexes in the city are geared toward senior housing. The data also does not indicate the quality of these units.

Figure 2.12: Occupancy and Vacancy Rates 2010 and 2018

	2010		2018*	
	% Owner Occupied Units	Vacancy Rate All Units	% Owner Occupied Units	Vacancy Rate All Units
Story County without Ames	77.7%	5.1%	78.0%	5.2%
Nevada	71.3%	7.7%	73.8%	5.0%
Huxley	72.9%	9.7%	80.4%	0.0%
Story City	69.2%	7.2%	66.4%	5.8%
Slater	81.3%	4.1%	80.0%	4.9%
Roland	85.9%	5.8%	79.9%	3.2%
Gilbert	81.2%	2.1%	82.3%	3.7%
Colo	77.6%	5.9%	77.1%	1.7%
Maxwell	81.7%	4.4%	78.8%	4.5%
Cambridge	81.9%	9.4%	80.4%	7.0%
Zearing	79.9%	10.6%	76.1%	10.7%
Collins	76.0%	10.5%	69.5%	13.5%
McCallsburg	79.4%	11.5%	76.3%	8.4%
Sheldahl	87.9%	6.1%	91.8%	15.4%
Kelley	76.7%	5.5%	81.8%	11.3%

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2014-2018 (*smaller cities tend to have larger margins of error in data reported)

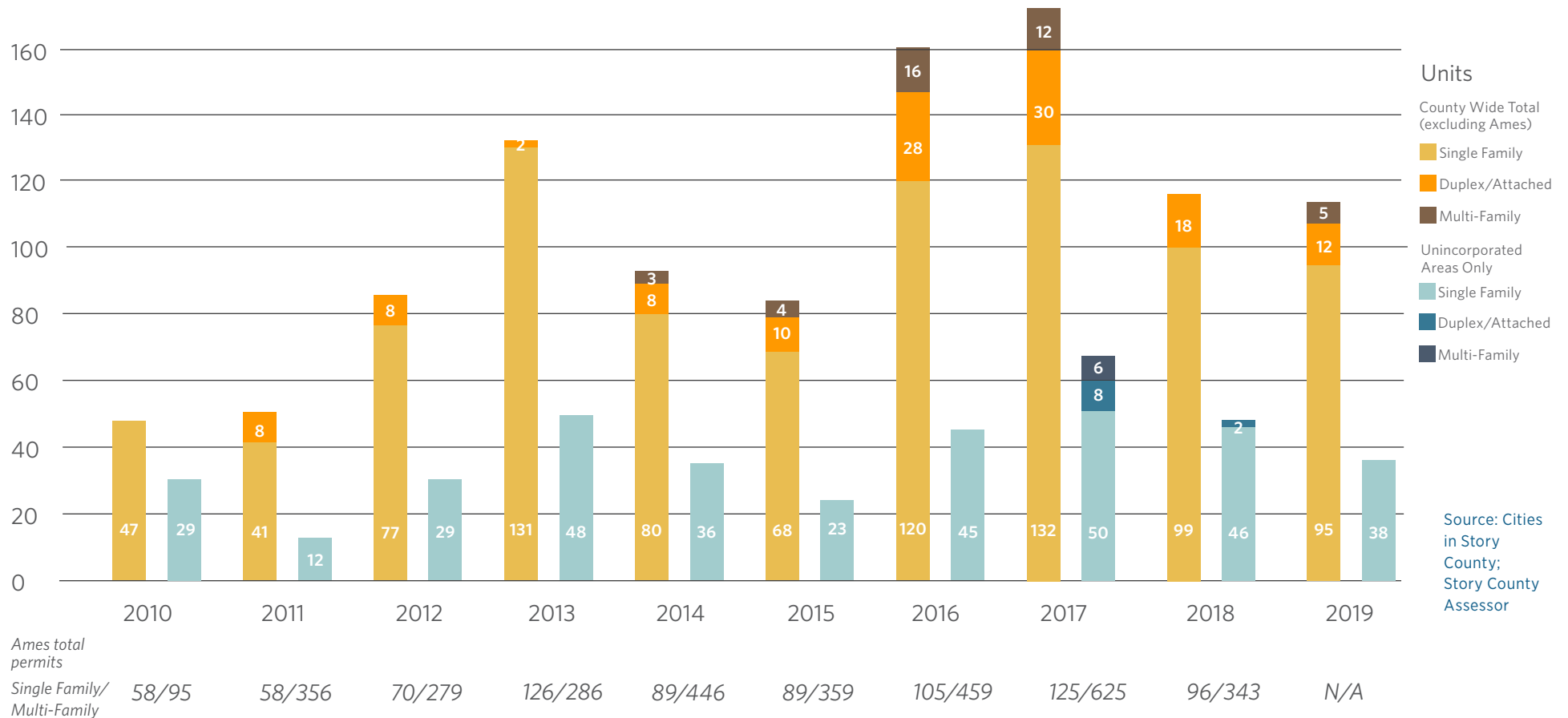
- Vacancy rates across all larger cities is low. A healthy vacancy rate is around 5% to 6%, which provides options in the market for people looking to move to or within the community.
 - › Some smaller cities show high vacancy rates above 10%. These are likely reflective of low quality units that are unoccupied or the margin of error in the American Community Survey estimates.

Construction Trends

The construction of residential units is perhaps the most direct indication of market demand. A private market developer or builder will not construct housing unless the price to construct is less than the sales price. For Story County, housing construction has rebounded since the 2008 Great Recession. The increase in residential construction also correlates to population growth by communities. However, the low vacancy rates noted previously may indicate that the residential construction supply is still below demand.

- Construction since 2009 consisted mostly of single-family dwellings at about 85% of all new construction in Story County.
- Since 2015, other types of housing products came online, with a minor increase in duplex and multi-family units. However, in comparison to the single-family construction, the amount of these products is minor.
- At an average household size of 2.5 people per household, the construction activity since 2010 would equate to a population growth rate of about 0.8%. This is higher than the estimated population growth experienced since 2010 and could indicate an underestimation of the 2018 population by the American Community Survey.
- About one-third of all construction was in Huxley.
- About one-third of units constructed since 2010 were in unincorporated areas of Story County. Acreages are a needed and desired product type. However, these homes often take up more land, are harder to serve with utilities, and create annexation issues if near a city's limits.
- Therefore, only about one-third of all units constructed were in incorporated cities other than Huxley. There is a low supply of units being constructed equally throughout Story County.

Figure 2.13: City and County Residential Construction Activity (2010-2019), excluding Ames



Condition

In many older cities, housing conditions vary by the age and location of neighborhoods, with the oldest and perhaps lowest quality housing surrounding the downtown core. This does not appear to be the widespread case in Story County. After conducting driving tours of each city, there is little evidence of widespread deteriorated housing conditions. Of course, there are some individual homes in need of rehabilitation help but the overall condition of housing in Story County is stable.

Figure 2.14 shows a breakdown of condition ratings as reported by the Story County Assessor.

Figure 2.14: Value and Condition Versus Year Built

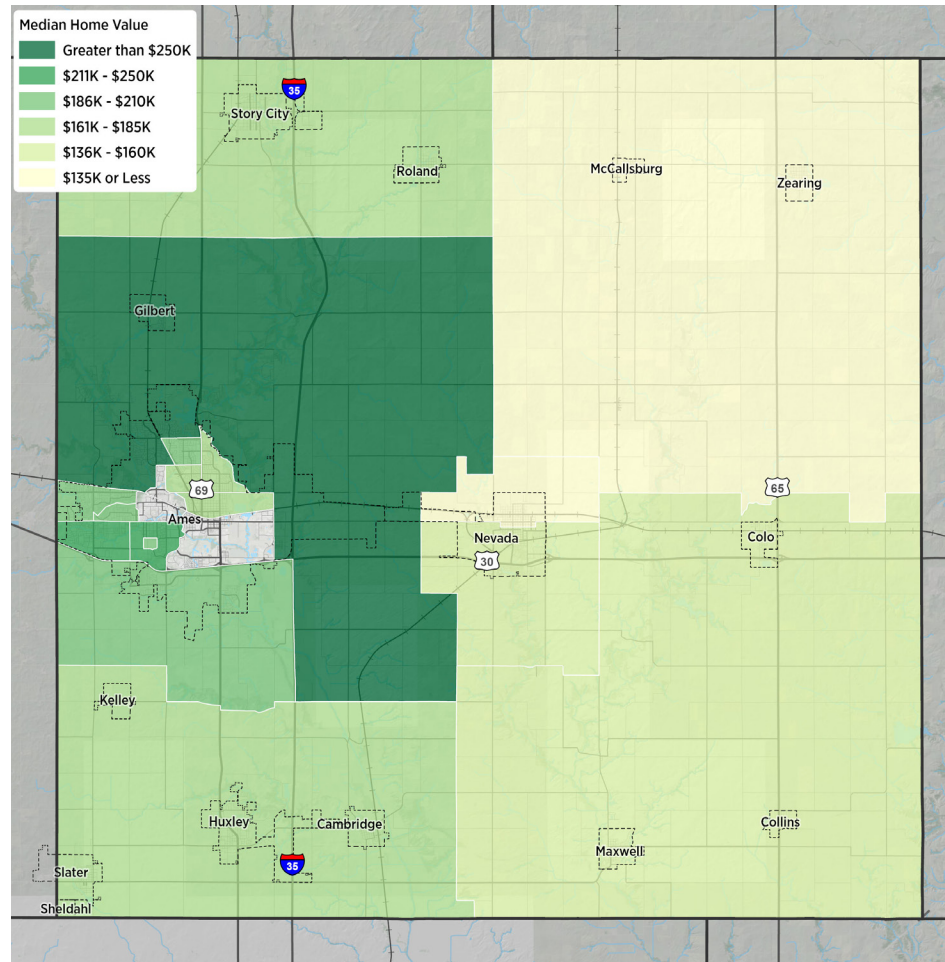


Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; Story County Assessor

Housing Value

The age and condition of housing are often reflected in the costs of housing. Figures 2.15 and 2.16 shows the relation of housing age to home value for owner units. As expected in Story County, the age of homes reflects the value. Maintaining homes constructed before 1970 is crucial for protecting attainable housing options for first time homebuyers and essential workers.

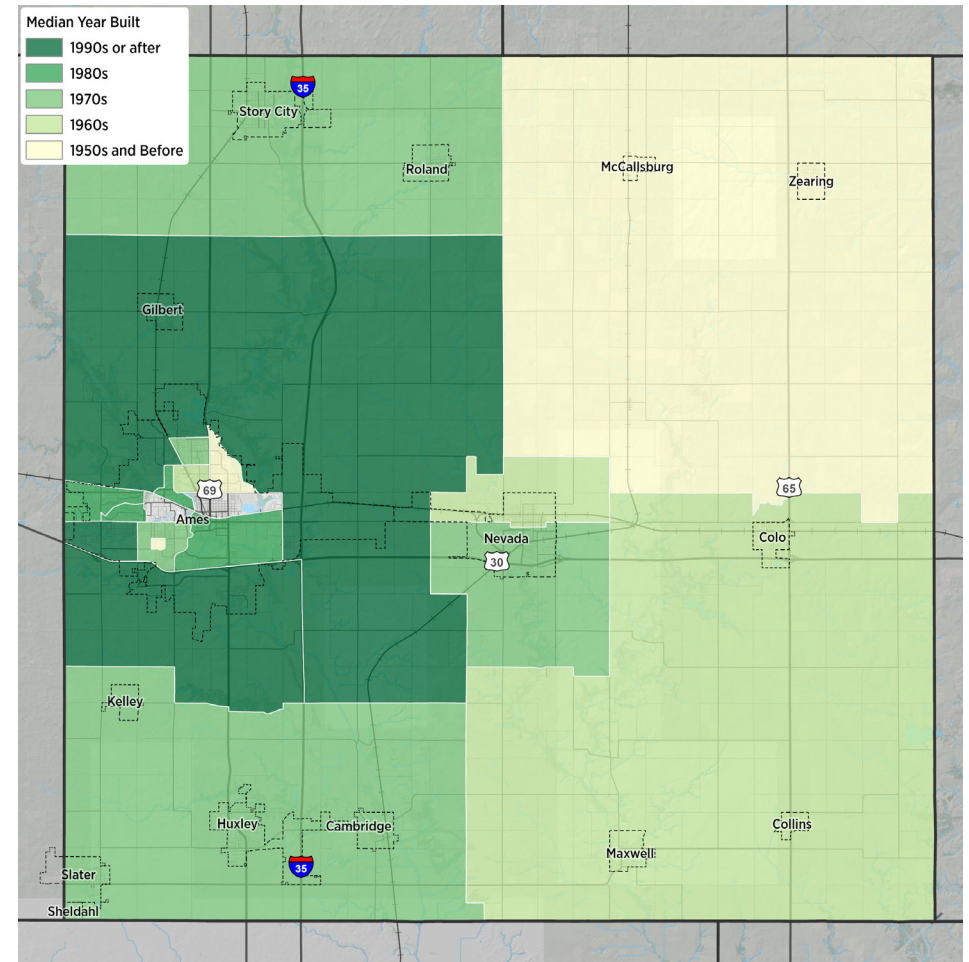
Figure 2.15: Median Home Value by Census Tract



Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018

However, when a market has a high demand for housing, renters and buyers are forced to accept what is available. Discussions with community members indicate this is truer for renters, whereas those looking to buy a home will often choose to live in another community.

Figure 2.16: Median Year Built by Census Tract



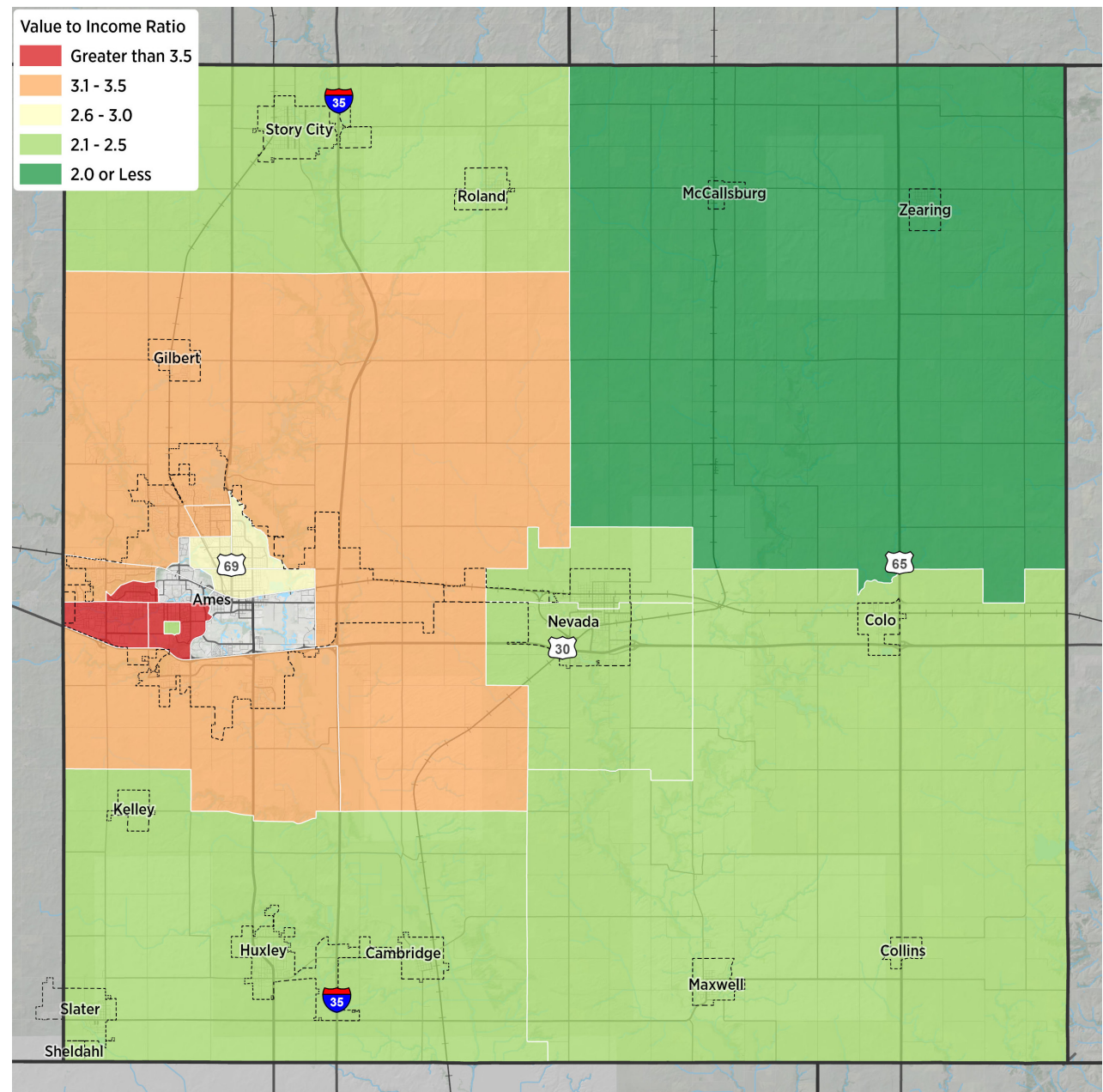
Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018

Affordability

The income of a household shows how much a household can afford when put in the context of local home values. One metric to evaluate whether income is enough to afford a home is to compare household income to the value of the home. This metric can be adapted to evaluate the affordability of housing markets in different cities.

In most instances, an affordable, self-sustaining housing market, with adequate value and revenues to support market-rate new construction, typically exhibits a value to income ratio between 2.5 to 3.0. Ratios above 3.0 present significant affordability issues, while ratios below 2.0 are significantly undervalued relative to income. **Figure 2.17** shows the value to income ratio by Census Tract. Areas around Ames tend to be more unaffordable for existing residents, although the tracts are large and include portions of Ames where there are student populations with low incomes.

Figure 2.17: Value to Income Ratio by Census Tract (2018)



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018

Figure 2.18 illustrates the value to income ratio in Story County and its benchmark counties.

- The presence of a large student population will exacerbate value to income ratios to levels above 3. This is because students have low to no incomes that drive down the median household income in Story County. For example, the value to income ratio in Story County is 3.31. Many from the community discussions agree that housing is Story County is unaffordable. However, perhaps not as much as the ratio indicates.
- Compared to similar university counties, Story County is comparable and even performs better than most from an overall affordability standpoint.

Figure 2.19 shows the breakdown of value to income by city in Story County. Ames drives up the county wide average. Other cities in Story County are considered more in balance and several are approaching undervalued since 2010.

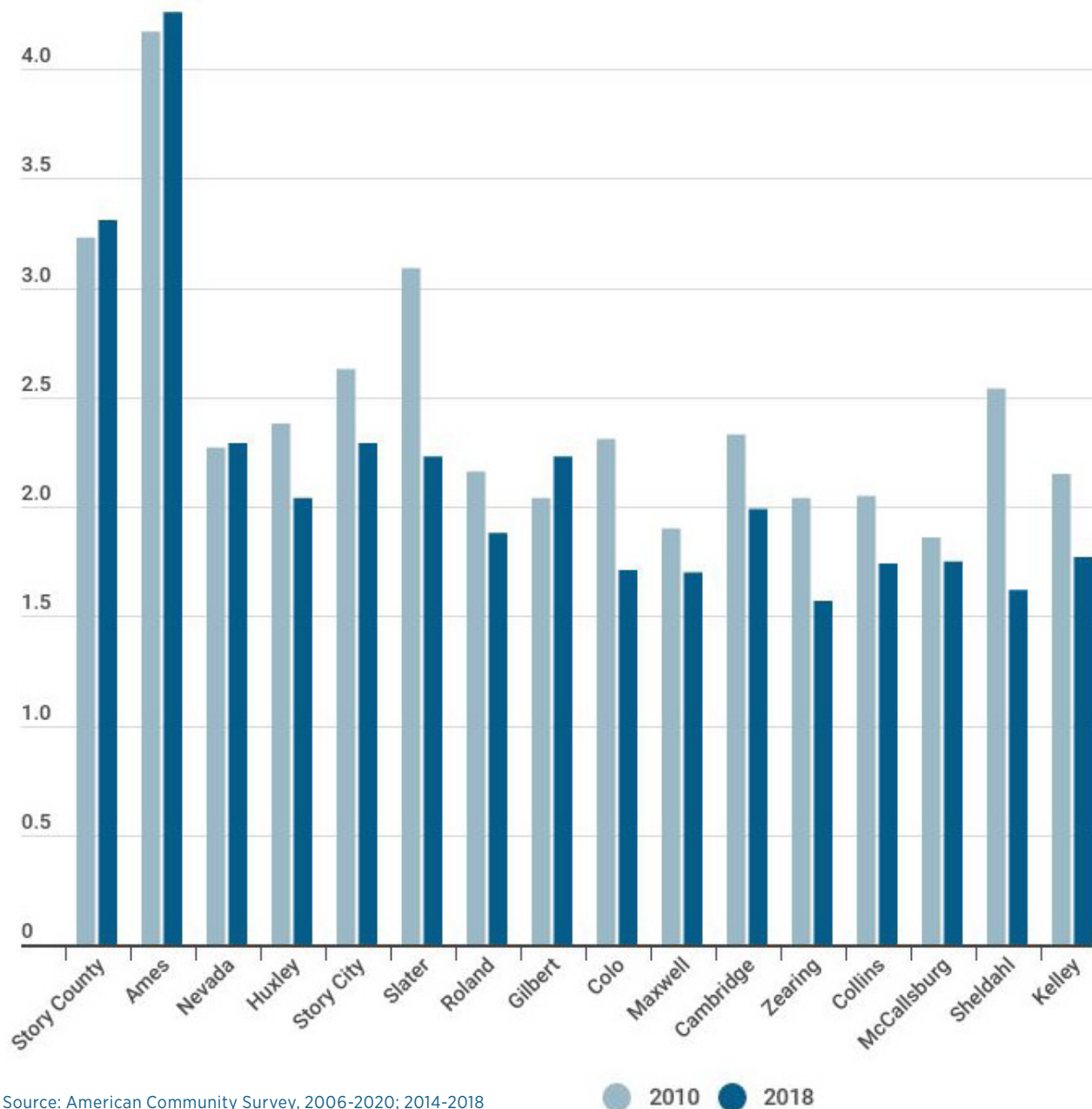
- The drop in value to income ratios for many communities is likely a result of higher-income households moving to cities outside of Ames and Ankeny rather than the housing becoming more affordable.

Figure 2.18: Benchmark County Affordability, 2018

	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	MEDIAN HOUSE VALUE	VALUE / INCOME RATIO	MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT	MEDIAN RENT AS % OF MEDIAN INCOME
Story County (including Ames)	\$54,554	\$180,400	3.31	\$782	17.20%
Johnson County, IA (U of Iowa)	\$61,640	\$216,900	3.52	\$846	16.50%
Monroe County, IN (U of Indiana)	\$47,075	\$167,900	3.57	\$756	19.30%
Lancaster County, NE (U of Nebraska)	\$58,009	\$167,900	2.89	\$698	14.40%
Riley County, KS (Kansas State)	\$49,910	\$194,800	3.9	\$793	19.10%

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018

Figure 2.19: Value to Income Ratio by City (2010-2018)



Source: American Community Survey, 2006-2020; 2014-2018

A Note on Affordability...

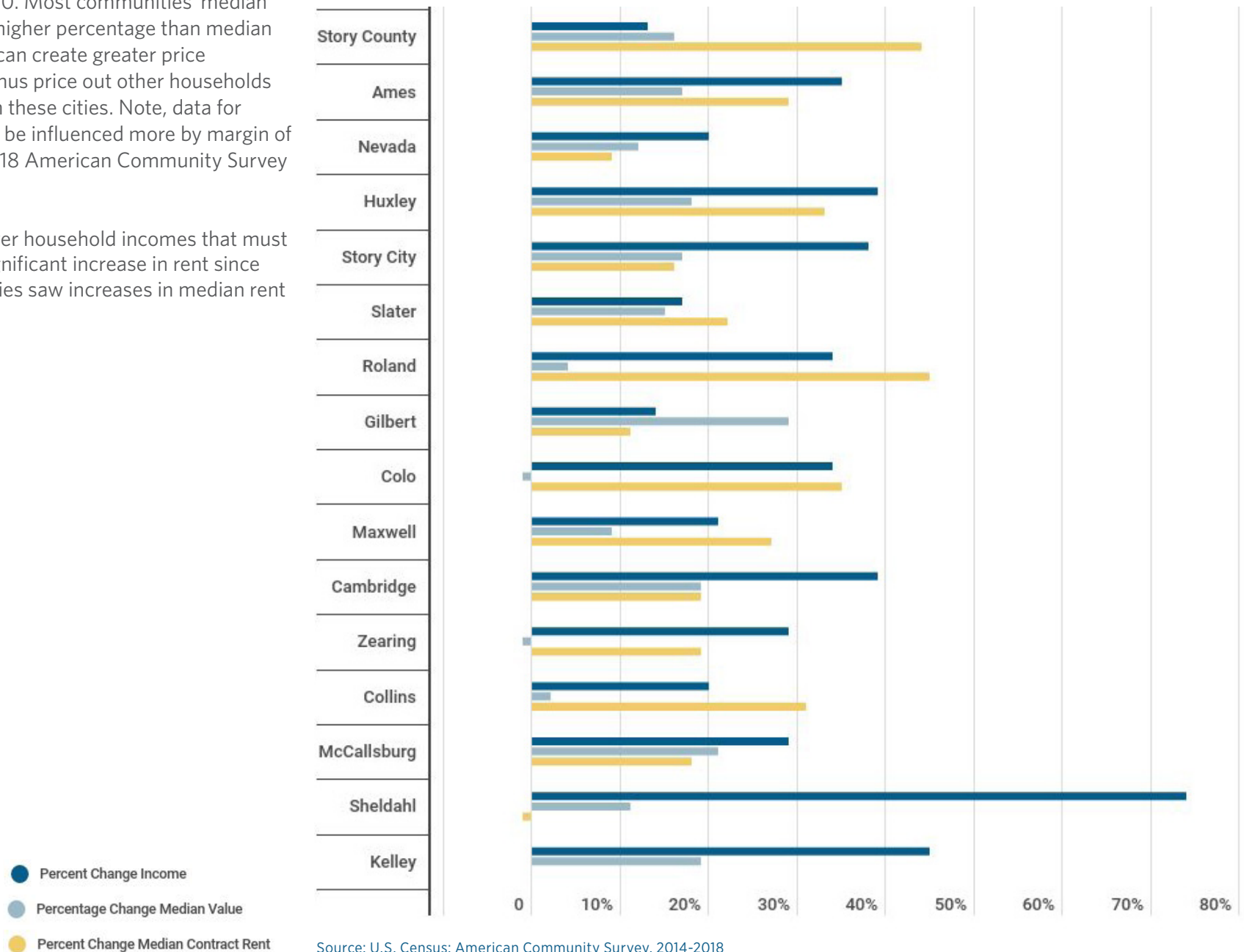
Many factors contribute to the housing market's overall affordability, including whether supply and demand are in balance, whether new units adjust values throughout the market, and whether there is enough vacancy to allow owners and renters to move within the market. Each of these principles requires time to allow the market to react before it balances at an equilibrium.

For example, constructing an additional 50 rental units at a much-needed price-point may take several years for the full impact of these units to balance into the market. First, those units would fill-up, leaving the lower quality units at a similar price-point under-occupied, eventually forcing the lowest quality units to be removed from the market, upgraded, or rents adjusted to their quality and condition.

Figure 2.20 illustrates income and housing changes since 2010. Most communities' median income rose by a higher percentage than median home value. This can create greater price competition and thus price out other households that want to live in these cities. Note, data for smaller cities may be influenced more by margin of errors with the 2018 American Community Survey estimates.

- Those with lower household incomes that must rent faced a significant increase in rent since 2010. Some cities saw increases in median rent by over 30%.

Figure 2.20: Percent Changes in Affordability, 2010-2018



Source: U.S. Census; American Community Survey, 2014-2018

To put the affordability data in context, **Figure 2.21** and **2.22** shows the income needed to afford various homes and rentals in the Des Moines-West Des Moines market.

- Many essential worker jobs do not pay enough for a person to reasonably afford to purchase a home with savings for a 10% downpayment.
- Many essential worker jobs also do not pay enough to afford more than a one bedroom apartment for rent.
- For reference, the 100% laborshed wage applicable to Nevada as calculated by the Iowa Department of Workforce Development is \$20.30 per hour, or roughly \$42,000 per year.

Figure 2.21: Des Moines-West Des Moines Homeownership Market Attainability

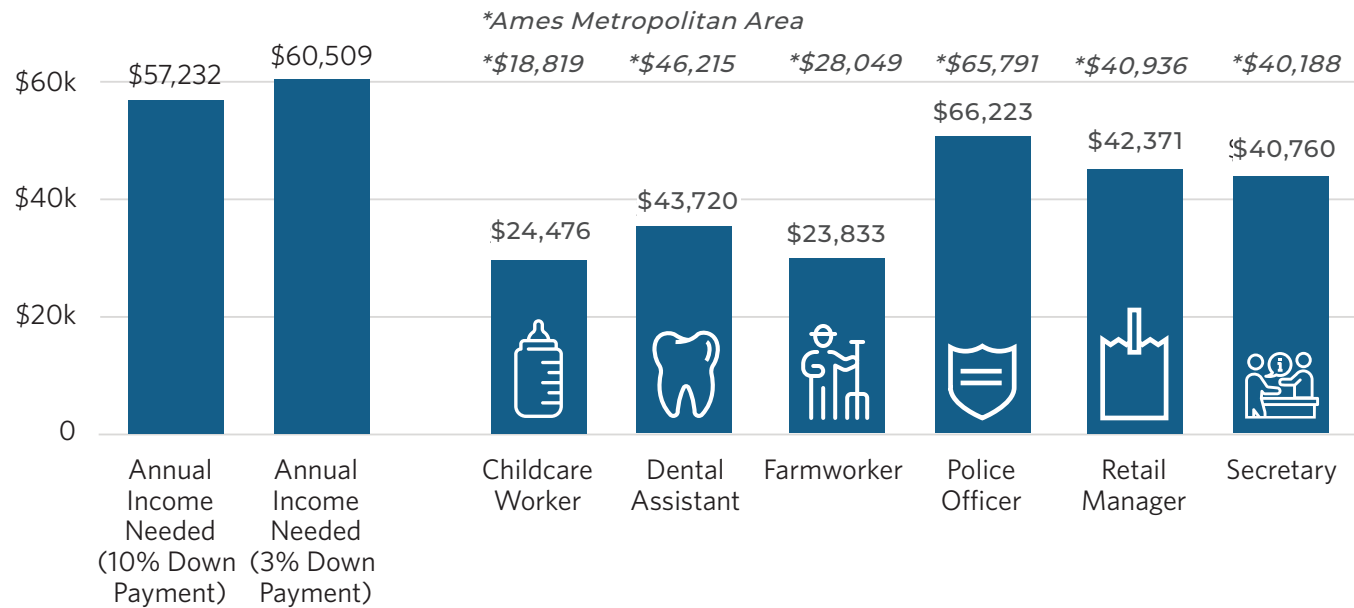
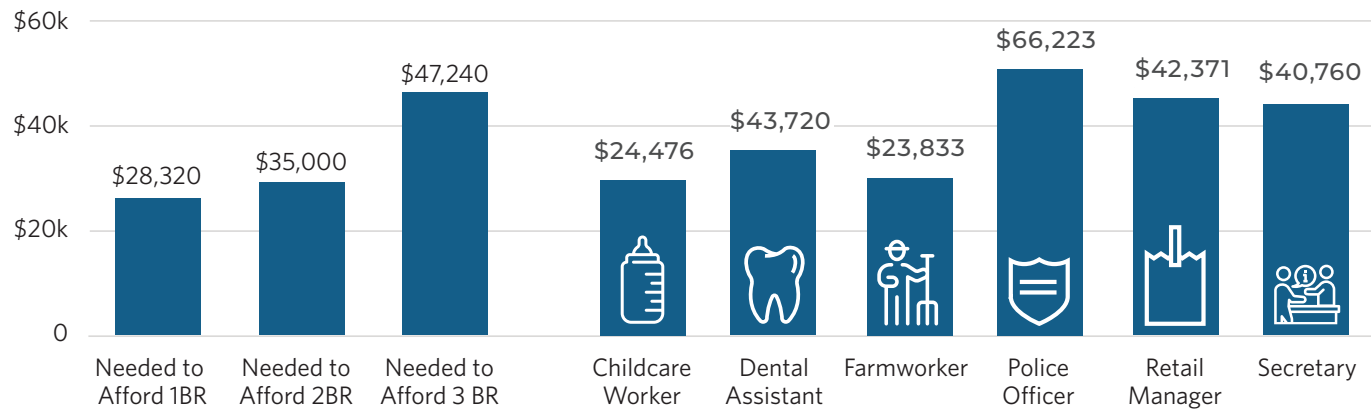


Figure 2.22: Des Moines-West Des Moines Rental Market Attainability



*2019 Median Salary at Iowa State University = \$113,742 (source: govsalaries.com)

Housing Affordability Gaps

Further analysis of the housing market shows where specific housing price point gaps exist. **Figure 2.23** illustrates comparisons of housing availability for the 11,976 households making different levels of income in Story County, not including Ames.

Use the income range \$0-\$24,999 as an example:

- There are 1,756 households living within this income range.
- An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$59,999 and there are an estimated 671 owner-occupied units within this value range.
- An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month and there are an estimated 885 rental units within this price range.
- Combined, there are a total of 1,556 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year.
- By subtracting the supply of affordable units (1,556) from the number of households in this income range (1,756), one can see that there are not enough units affordable for households in this income level.

The analysis reveals several conclusions about the affordability and future strategies for the Story County housing market.

Figure 2.23: Housing Affordability, Story County excluding Ames



Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

A shortage of homes exists for the lowest income households making less than \$25,000 in Story County. This is common because the private market cannot support the creation of new housing units within this price-point without incentives. The best source of affordable housing for this market are rental units, and often subsidized rentals. While there may be single-family homes priced below \$60,000 in Story County, these units often require significant investment that would be beyond the financial ability of lower income households.

The analysis reveals a surplus of housing for households with incomes between \$25,000 and \$74,999. For these households, affordable homes for purchase would go as high as \$199,000. These price points are the housing supply that stakeholders indicated are in low supply. So why this contradiction? There are several reasons but the two most important are:

- There are many households making more than \$75,000 that cannot find housing that matches their incomes. Therefore, they are living in housing priced below \$199,000.
- Statewide and nationally, home owners are less mobile, living in their homes longer, and thus not bringing housing to the market in these price points. This is especially true during a recession where households are more savings oriented.

With a shortfall of housing for the income brackets above \$75,000, it appears these upper income households are out-competing lower income households for the same housing products. The gap in housing units above \$200,000 and low building activity further supports the notion that higher income households are choosing options below their price point.

While a degree of the traditional move-up model still exists, many established residents will either remain in their current housing until they downsize or until significantly better opportunities become available, including high quality amenities but not necessarily square footage.

A housing shortage typically affects the lowest income households more because of the limited choices in the market. When supply is low, middle or high-income households can always choose a lower priced home or housing in another community. When higher-income households choose to live in homes below their price point, fewer options are available for other households, forcing them to live in potentially substandard units or spend a significant amount of their income on housing.

A large, thick, blue stylized letter 'E' that serves as a background element for the text.

QUALITATIVE
INSIGHTS

QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

The voices of people that live in Story County are a vital component to identify housing market demand and the status of housing supply, variety, and affordability. A series of listening sessions were held in the fall of 2020. While these sessions were to be in the summer of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic changed the ability to meet in person. However, participation and input remained robust from many different demographic groups across Story County. Additionally, a survey of the general public received 672 responses.

Community Listening

A series of discussions with community stakeholders, including Realtors, lenders, builders and developers, city staff, council members, employers, and general residents, provided the most direct and beneficial insight into housing conditions in the County.

Figure 3.1 shows the groups that participated in discussions. The assets, issues, and opportunity themes reflect the conversations. In general, the conversations with stakeholders match the quantifiable data in the Census, MLS listings, and local data. However, a few other themes from the conversations are not as easily shown in quantifiable data:

- Disagreements in responsibility between rural and urban utility services, especially water service for annexed land.

Figure 3.1: Listening Session Participants

Group	Date	Attendance
Builders and Developers	September 2, 2020	2
Realtors and Lenders	September 2, 2020	3
Chambers and Economic Development	September 2, 2020	2
Schools and Major Employers	September 2, 2020	2
Low Income Service Organizations	September 3, 2020	7
Community Organizations	September 3, 2020	6
Elected Officials	September 3, 2020	9
Miscellaneous one-on-one	October 9 and 15, 2020	2

- The presence of student oriented housing in Ames influences the entire county. The higher prices of rental options in Ames forces many out of the Ames market to search in other communities. Thus, rental supply is low to non-existent in many Story County communities.
- The number and types of services households need continue to increase. Examples include food pantries, transitional housing, rent assistance, childcare, and other necessities.
 - › Many on the steering committee also noted that transitional and group home housing is secluded to Ames by necessity. Ames has the services that the patrons of these housing types need. Rather, the focus might be better applied to creating adequate transportation options outside of Ames for people without cars to make transitional housing in other communities possible.
- Trouble for specific households to get into the market because of past credit history or landlords not accepting vouchers.

Transitional and Special Needs Capacity Snapshot

- Bridge Home, formerly the Emergency Residence Project - Numbers are increasing every year. Served 720 people at the end of 2019. Operating at capacity and turning people away.
- Section 8 wait list is 1.5 years.
- More than 300 individuals experiencing homelessness who gained access to transitional or permanent housing in 2019.
- 570 individuals served in 2019 through the United Way of Story County partner agencies for shelter, transitional living programs, or other re-housing options.
- 1,454 households in Story County who received financial assistance to help with housing cost burdens and prevent homelessness through the United Way.

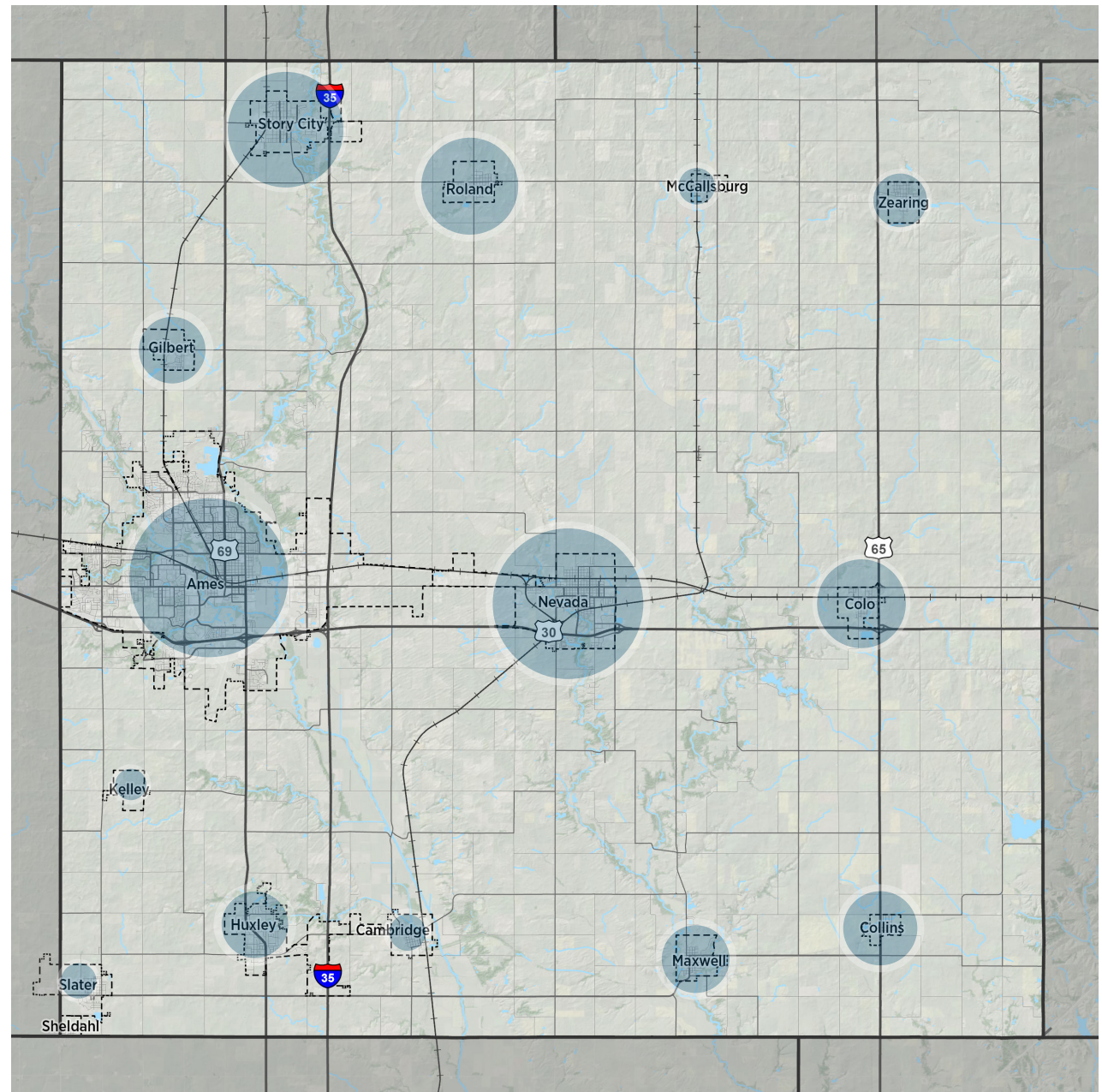
Community Survey

A survey gathered perceptions and desires from the general population in Story County. The survey did not exclude Ames participants because they may have an interest in moving to other communities in Story County. 672 people took the survey from the cities shown in **Figure 3.2**. The survey was advertised via e-mails, social media, local web pages, and through County organizations. Spanish and paper versions were also available. While the survey was not administered in a statistically valid method, the demographics of respondents generally match data reported by the Census, other than over-representing higher income households.

The following pages illustrate the feelings of survey respondents and essential differences from data when prevalent. The Appendix includes full results and open ended comments. There were more than 140 open ended comments. The comments range in themes, some generalized as:

- Low Affordability Overall - 36 comments
 - › Rent affordability - 12 comments
 - › Home affordability - 12 comments
- Lack of Low Income and Homelessness Options - 18 comments
- Housing Product Types Desired - 23 comments
- Elderly options - 13 comments
- Housing program needs - 12 comments
- Housing conditions - 10 comments

Figure 3.2: Survey Respondent Location



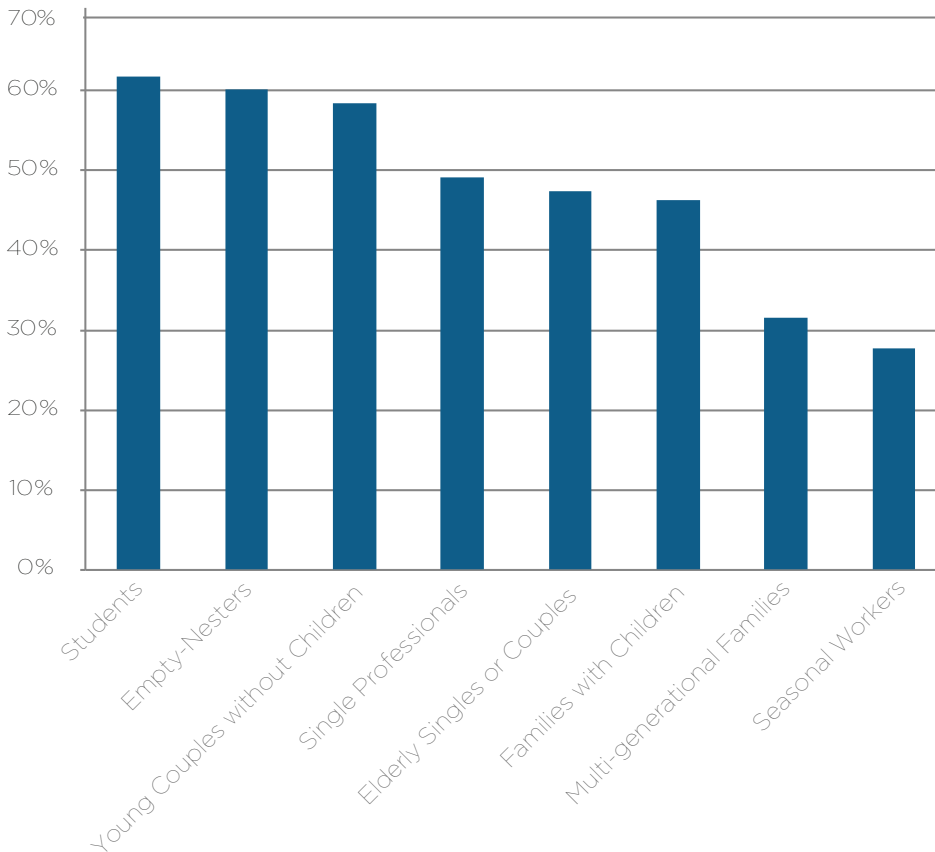
Survey Trends

Supply - Availability Perceptions

As indicated in the listening sessions and the market data, survey respondents also said that housing is in low supply.

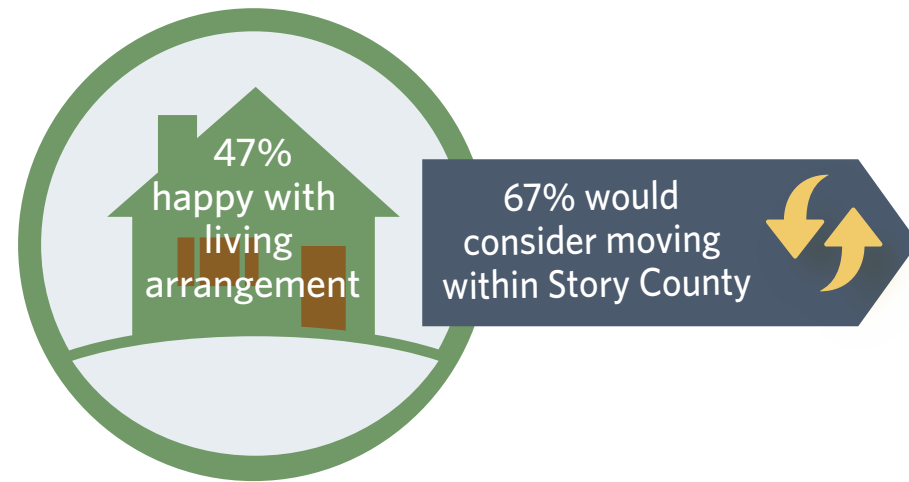
- Seasonal workers and multi-generational families have the fewest housing options as felt by well under 50% of survey respondents (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Does Housing in Story County Adequately Meet these Household's Needs? (percent responding "yes")



The responses are telling because many people would consider moving in the next three years to somewhere else in Story County, shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Respondents looking for a new place to live in the next three years



For those survey respondents that have looked for housing in the last three years, many saw significant differences in the supply of rentals (Figure 3.5) and homes (Figure 3.6) at different price points.

- Respondents felt a prominent undersupply of any rental priced below \$1,000 a month, while an oversupply of rental units priced over \$2,000 a month.
 - › Prices under \$500 a month are mostly secluded to low income housing projects and programs.
- The highest balance of rental prices fell between \$500 and \$999 a month, but still only felt by about 30% of respondents.
- Respondents recognized the most balance in homes prices above \$200,000. Homes at this level are generally market rate new construction.
- Any home under \$200,000 is felt to be significantly undersupplied. Listening sessions indicated that many of these homes are occupied by households who are not moving for a variety of different reasons. However, one reason to not move is lack of housing products people want to move to.

Figure 3.5: If you have looked for rental housing in the past three years, how would you rate the availability of rental housing in your community for the following rental ranges?

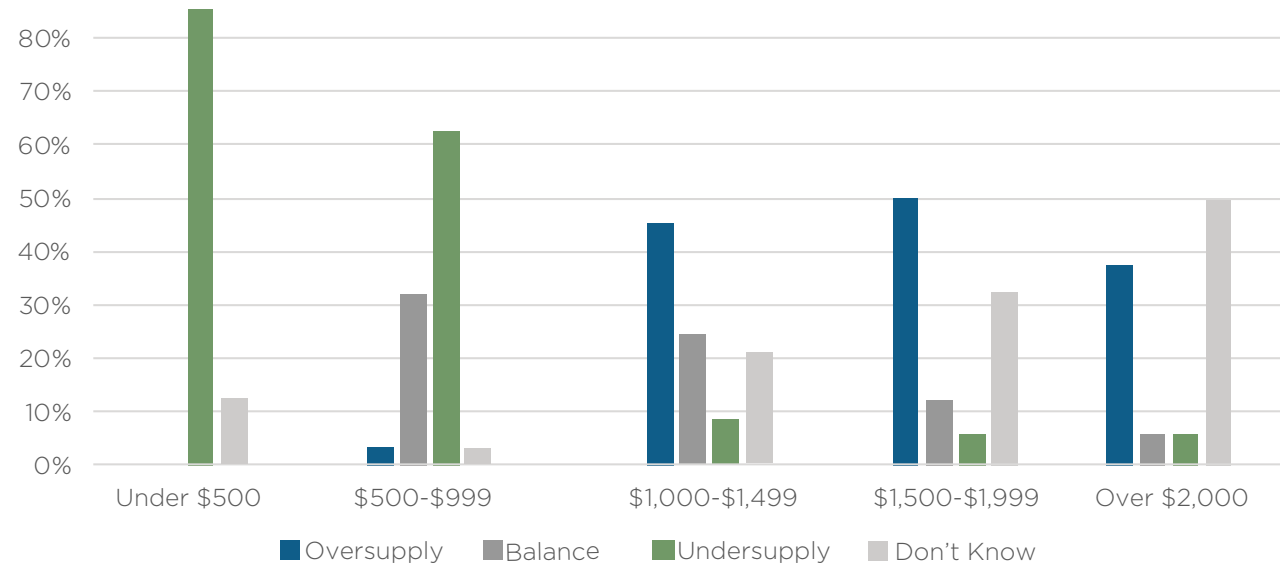
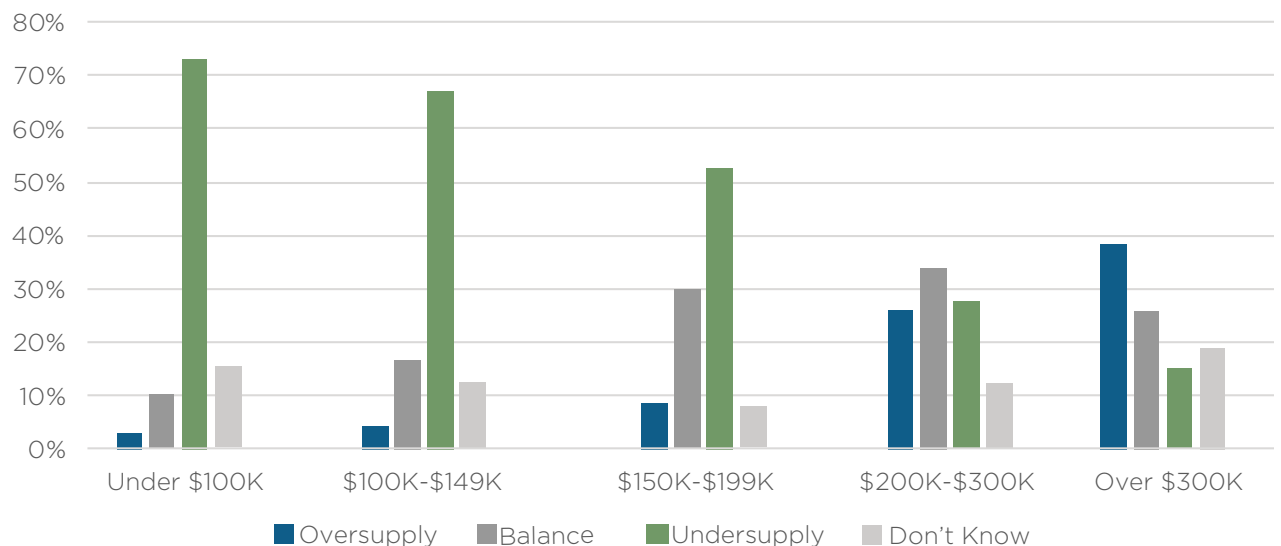


Figure 3.6: If you have looked to purchase a home in the past three years, how would you rate availability of housing in your community for each of the following price categories?



Demand - Housing Preferences

Survey respondents felt strongly about certain housing products needed in Story County. The responses represent preferences of residents and their experiences in the housing market.

The responses on this page show that many people feel that a variety of housing types would be successful in Story County. The answers partially indicate that people see the singularity of housing products being built today and want to see other options.

Figure 3.7: Do you think the following housing products would be successful in Story County today?

Affordable, small two- or three-bedroom house



Mid-size, three-bedroom house



Townhouse or duplex



Independent - senior living housing



Large lot residential housing



Apartment



Accessory dwelling unit



Elderly are most likely interested in...

1. Apartment with additional services available
2. Owner home with shared maintenance
3. Unit attached/adjacent to family member
4. Assisted living unit
5. Small independent owner home
6. Independent apartment

Downtown upper-story residential



Row housing



Larger home with four or more bedrooms



Demand - Housing Preferences

Survey respondents felt strongly about certain housing products needed in Story County. The responses represent preferences of residents and their experiences in the housing market.

The responses on this page show that many people feel that a variety of housing types would be successful in Story County. The answers partially indicate that people see the singularity of housing products being built today and want to see other options.

Affordability

The cost of housing came out as a primary factor of concern in Story County by survey respondents.

Figure 3.8: How much is your monthly rent or mortgage payment?

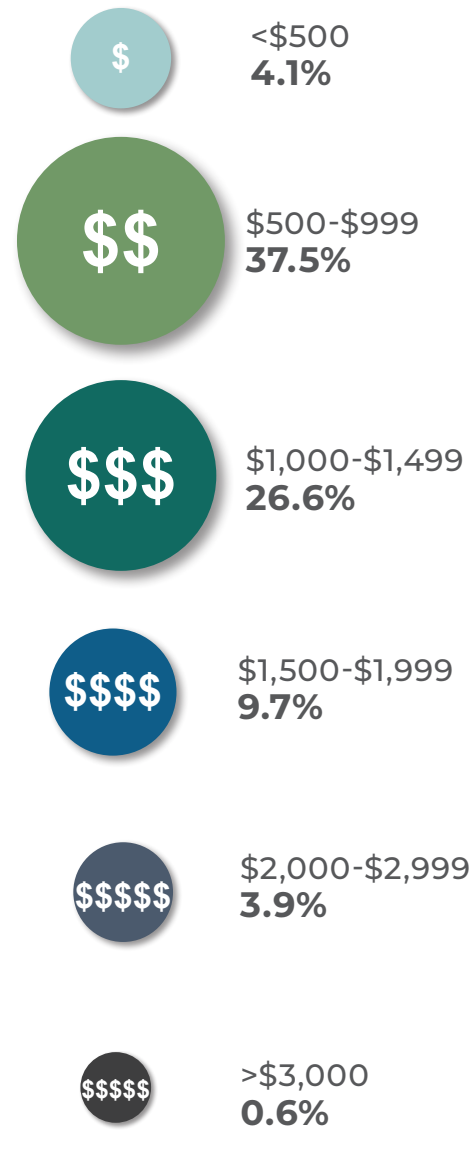
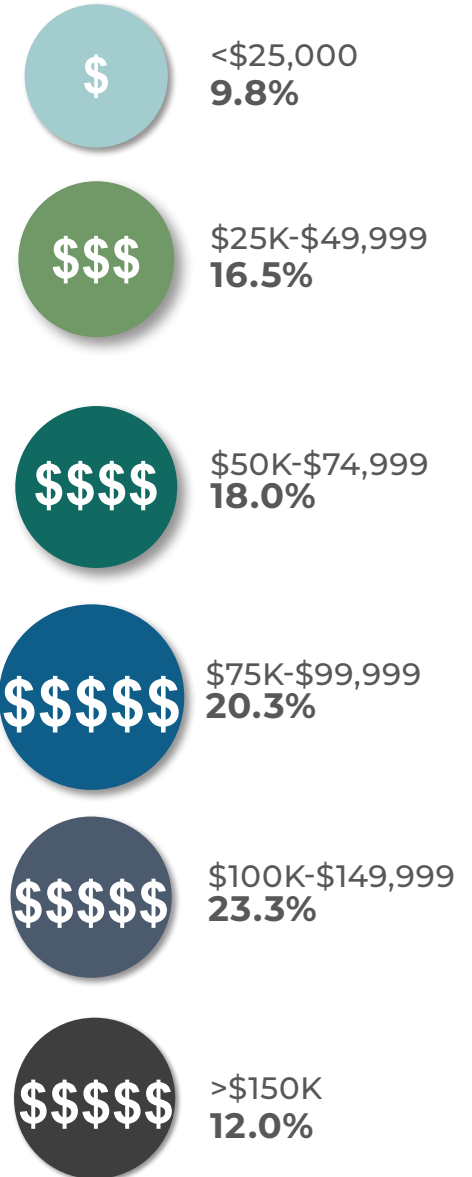


Figure 3.9: What is your household income?



*17.6% reported paid off mortgages or living rent free

Selected Survey Comments

"I live in rural Maxwell and we really need build able lots in our area and for a developer to develop the lots that we have on the north end of town. It would also be nice to see places both in town and in the rural areas to have to keep properties more clean."

"Myself and many of my coworkers commute into Story County because of affordability. Because of that, I also struggle to participate in activities and events in Story County that would benefit me in my professional role, but my commute just doesn't make it feasible."

"Promoting variety of housing types, higher-density and more transportation options would be an improvement."

"The City of Zearing is full. We have little to no housing, rental or purchase opportunities. Our town could easily support additional housing growth. People want to move here but there is nothing available. More development is needed for housing in Zearing."

"I believe that we should look at improving public transportation options throughout the county, which would contribute to improving housing options for low- and moderate-income people in Story County."

"Roland is a nice small town in but there is no more options for people to build. They need to develop more residential lots to bring additional people."

"There are not enough affordable homes for sale for young professionals just starting out."

The theme was in spite that many survey respondents make incomes above the county median and appear to live in homes/rentals that cost less than what they could afford.

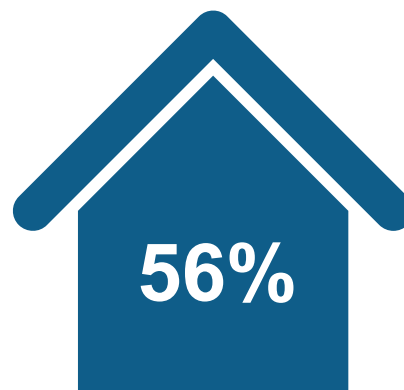
Figure 3.8 and 3.9 shows the reported costs that respondents pay for housing and their reported household income. The color of the circles corresponds the household income range with the typical monthly payment for housing they could afford.

Figure 3.10: Which types of housing solutions would you support to reduce the cost of housing in Story County (select all that apply)?

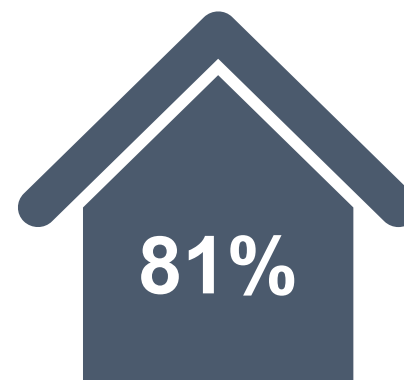
Type of Solution	% Supporting
Downpayment assistance to owners	60.5%
Housing rehabilitation loans	54.9%
Duplex or townhome construction	48.0%
Mortgage assistance	47.4%
Public acquisition of dilapidated properties	44.9%
Grants or low-interest loans to housing developments	42.6%
Public development of infrastructure	36.3%
Pre-manufactured or modular housing (not mobile homes)	34.7%
Construction financing assistance to builders	26.3%
Higher density or "cluster" development housing	23.0%
Section 8 rental subsidies	22.3%

"There's no way to get ahead for low income families so many continue generational poverty. There should be a way for the local government to help those who qualify buy a home ex Habitat for Humanity programs but at a local level." - Survey Respondent

Percent supporting greater enforcement of property maintenance codes



Percent supporting public funding to remove dilapidated housing



Percent supporting public funding for housing rehabilitation or renovations





OUR NEEDS

The projected future housing needs in Story County stem from a demand model that builds on population projections, housing trends, and community conversations to forecast the demand for additional housing. A calculated approach to housing demand helps create policies, partnerships, and strategies to meet these needs and enhance existing housing market strengths.

For Story County, the housing needs identified in this section are spread across many different populations. Each has their own housing preferences and needs. One household could fit under several classifications. Typical classifications of households include, but are not limited to:

- Families - Households with school aged children.
 - › There will be needs in every community to support family households.
- Empty-nesters - Households of any age without children living in the home. They could be working adults or retirees.
 - › There will be needs in every community to support empty-nester households.
- Retirees - A subset of empty-nesters who are retired from full time work. They may or may not desire lower maintenance homes or additional services.
 - › There will be needs in every community to support retiree households.
- Elderly - The oldest households that often need help with maintenance and household care. They may or may not live in a single-family house. Assisted living communities cater to these households.
 - › There will be needs in every community to support elderly households through traditional homes and rental options. Assisted living facilities are more feasible in Story County's largest communities where there are nearby services.
- Students - Households comprised of students attending Iowa State or a community college that live off-campus. They typically live in rental units.
 - › Listening sessions did not indicate a large influx of students to communities outside of Ames. There are likely a small portion that live in rental units throughout Huxley, Nevada, Gilbert, or Story City, but not a critical mass that directly impacts housing options in these communities. However, the number living in Ames does create an inflated rental market in Ames that forces some other households to live outside of Ames. Thus, creating rental shortages county wide.
- Group Quarters Households - These are households in institutionalized or non-institutionalized housing. These populations are not included in determination of future housing needs.
 - › Institutionalized - Those populations in correctional facilities, juvenile facilities nursing facilities, and other institutional facilities.
 - › Non-institutionalized - Those populations in university housing, military quarters, and other similar facilities.
- Transitional living - Housing on a temporary basis, generally referring to homeless populations trying to obtain stable housing.
 - › Transitional housing is most needed where there is also access to other services like counseling, food pantries, etc. For areas outside of Ames, this may mean first creating affordable transportation options for people to reach these services in Ames.
- Special needs - Housing for those that need regular attention such as a mental or physical disability.
 - › Housing for these households are ideally needed in every community. This can be possible with the use of traveling nurses and in-home care. However, the bulk of the need will be in larger communities in the County with access to services and the economies of scale for units that come with proximity to the larger population bases.

Population Growth Forecast

As detailed in Chapter 1, almost all cities in Story County are growing. Recent construction activity, historical growth rates, location, and market conditions indicate that a 0.8% annual growth rate is a feasible forecast for Story County when excluding Ames. Construction activity was at this same rate in the last ten years and construction in the previous five years would indicate a growth rate above 1%. However, the short-term effects of the pandemic and recession are uncertain and will likely have some impact on housing construction once lagging effects catch up in the economy.

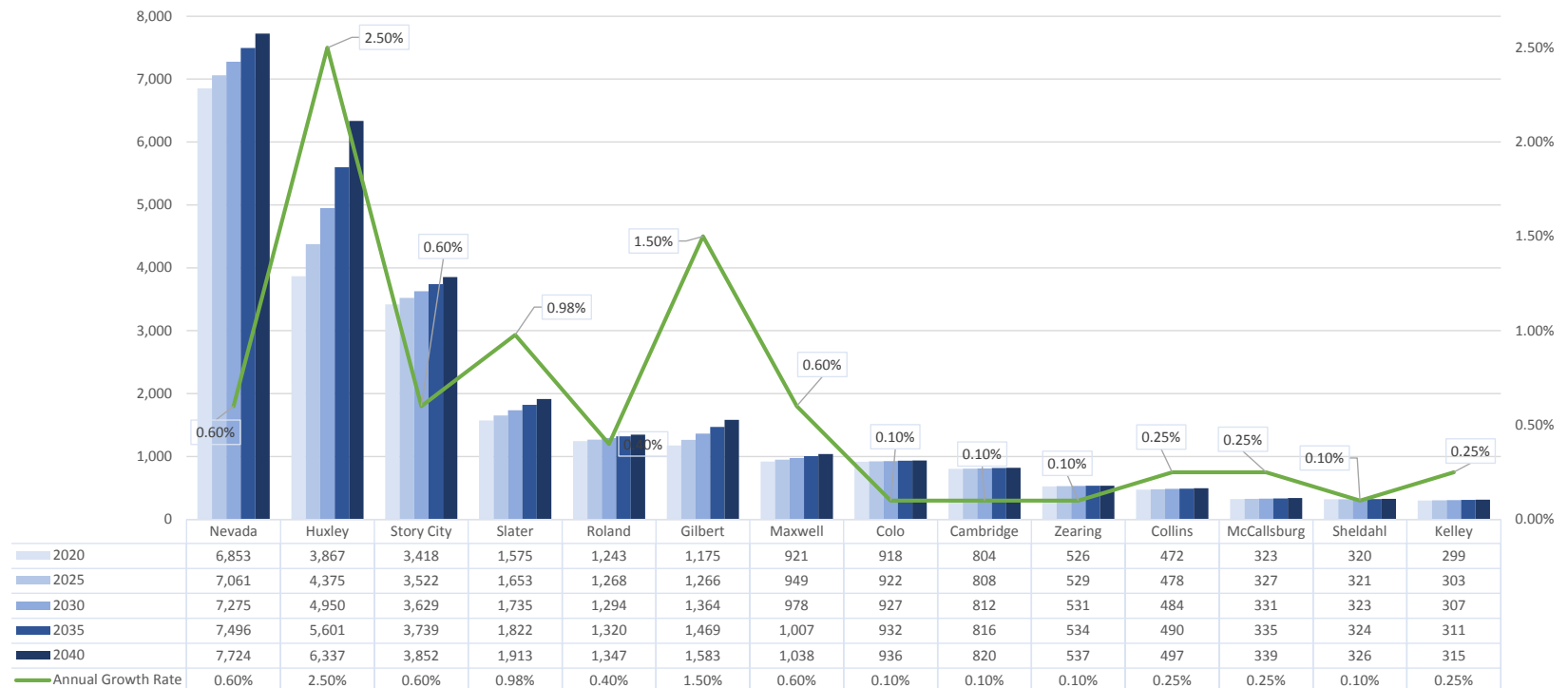
Figure 4.1 shows the results of a forecasted population growth at 0.8% annually through 2040. Under this forecast, areas in Story County not including Ames would see a 2040 population of 36,881. Note that the housing demand forecast is more reliable through 2030 than 2040. The population forecasts do not split evenly between cities.

There are many factors in the long-term that can affect the housing market. How these factors will change become less certain further in the future.

- Huxley is forecast to grow at the highest rate in the near term, primarily because of land already available and its strategic location in Story County.

- Cities in the northeast and eastern parts of Story County are forecast to grow less than the County average. However, their annual growth rates will be higher than in years before 2020.
- Unincorporated areas and cities under 1,000 people will grow at the lowest annual rate. The forecast anticipates that building activity in unincorporated areas will be less than in 2010-2019. This is partially attributed to an aging population and their needs to be in larger cities where there are housing options and services. Annexation of unincorporated areas will have an impact as well. The housing demand forecast in the next section provides additional insight.

Figure 4.1: 2020-2040 Population Forecast by Community



Source: RDG Planning & Design

Retiree and Senior Population

Nationally, the number of individuals moving into their retirement years over the next 10 years will be at the highest rates in history. This population shift will have a significant impact on the housing market. **Figure 4.3** outlines the projected population change for the 55 and older age groups in Story County, excluding Ames, by 2030. The population is projected using natural change of deaths with a migration factor equivalent to what was experienced in 2010.

Of the three age groups, the greatest growth will occur in the cohort 65-74 years old. At the same time a decline will occur in 55 to 64 year olds as this generation is smaller than the Boomers. The impact this may have on the housing market includes:

- Some seniors may choose to age in place increasing both the demand for additional in-home services and the need to renovate existing homes to accommodate changes in mobility.
- A portion of this population will look to move to housing that offers reduced maintenance and greater connectivity to their community and peers.
- National market trends indicate aging Boomers are more likely to use in-home services, reducing the need for assisted living and skilled nursing units. For this reason, the demand for these units is not expected to substantially increase in Story County.

Figure 4.2: Older Cohort Population Change, 2000-2018

	2000	2010	2018	2010-2018 % Change
55-64	2,461	3,905	4,422	21.0%
65-69	903	1,175	1,548	41.3%
70-74	906	918	950	3.5%
75-79	806	692	745	6.6%
80-84	676	607	547	-8.9%
85 and Over	686	779	827	7.0%
Total	3,977	4,171	4,617	11.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.3: Projected Population Change, Age 55 and Over

	2020	2030	Change	% Change
55-64	4,392	3,387	-1,005	-22.9%
65-74	2,498	3,957	1,458	58.4%
75 and Over	2,123	3,409	1,286	60.5%
Total 55 and Over	9,039	10,753	1,714	19.0%
Total 65 and Over	4,617	7,366	2,749	59.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

The locations of the retiree age cohort growth and decline will vary by community. Because these households likely will not have younger children living with them, school districts are less of a deciding factor for where to live. For the oldest households, the growth will be focused toward housing that is accessible and low maintenance, whether owner or rental.

Housing Demand Forecast

Figure 4.4 calculates the overall demand for housing from 2020-2040 by considering:

1. Projected population (Figure 4.1).
2. Household population and size.
3. Household demand, generated by the number of households today and the number generated by new growth.
4. The vacancy rate may change over time, especially in cities where the vacancy rate is under 5% and more vacancy is needed to offer options in the market.
5. An annual replacement need of units lost to demolition, fire, or natural disasters.

For the market to support new growth and offer variety in the market, approximately 1,375 new housing units will meet demand through 2030 and 2,958 through 2040. The demand equals about 148 new units annually, including both renter and owner units, compared to current building activity since 2010, at about 103 units per year. Like population growth, housing needs will vary by city:

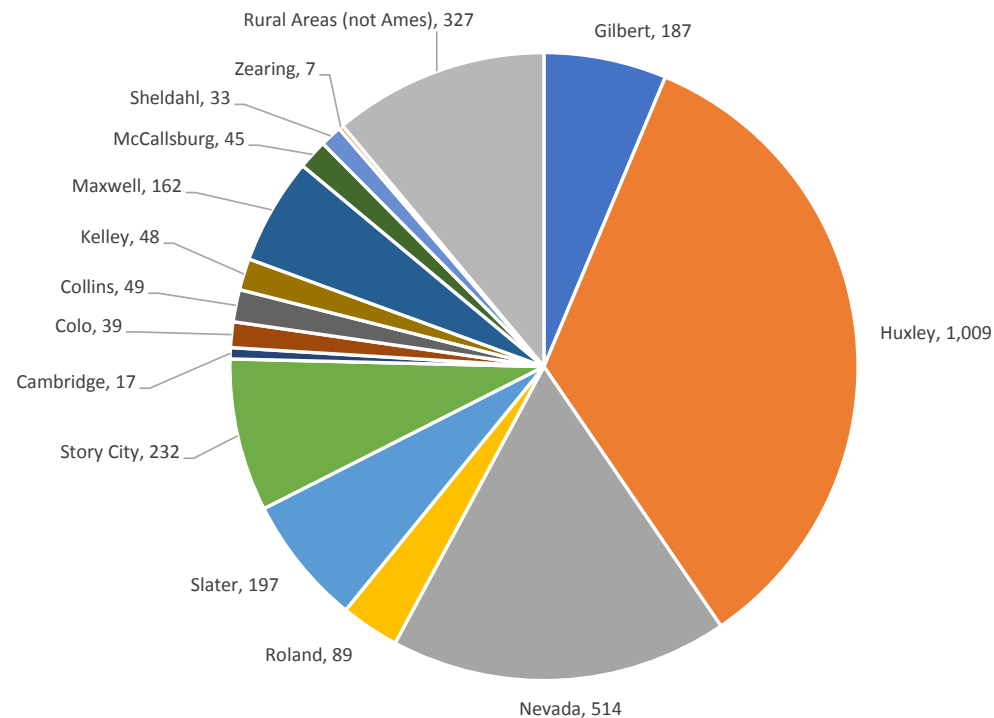
- Huxley will demand the most housing at 452 units through 2030, and 1,009 through 2040.
- All other cities can support more housing construction than what was built annually in recent years.
- A large amount of construction since 2010 was in unincorporated areas, but some of these areas were annexed. Entry level housing cannot be built on larger lots. To match affordability needs, fewer units are distributed in unincorporated areas than recently.

Figure 4.4: Story County Housing Needs, excluding Ames

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	31,448	32,726	34,057	35,441	36,881	
Household Population at End of Period	31,030	32,291	33,603	34,969	36,390	
Average People per Household	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.39	2.38	
Household Demand at End of Period	12,929	13,455	14,001	14,647	15,322	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.3%	6.5%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	13,609	14,238	14,895	15,623	16,387	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		45	45	45	45	180
Cumulative Need During Period		673	702	773	809	2,958
Average Annual Construction		135	140	155	162	148

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.5: 2020-2040 Housing Needs by City



Giving everyone a chance

A variety of different types and price-points of housing must be offered to meet demand. Figure 4.6 demonstrates how the total number of units should be split across owner and renter occupancy and at what price-points. As many factors can change in the future, the housing development program demonstrates the general ratio needed through 2040 and not the exact number of units.

The development program reflects the following factors:

- Total need from Figure 4.4.
- Owner/Renter Proportion: The current split across Story County, excluding Ames, is 78% owner-occupied and 22% renter occupied. Building activity since 2010 shows an 84%/16% split in single-family to multi-family units (multi-family units include duplexes). Only about 4% of construction were structures with more than two units. This reflects the shortage of rental housing many participants noted. The program reflects a 60/40 split to address this shortage.
- Affordability Ranges: The proportions reflect the existing proportion of household incomes estimated for Story County, with corresponding affordable ranges. The ranges should change with inflation over time according to the consumer price index.

Figure 4.6: Story County Housing Development Program, excluding Ames

	2020-2025	2026-2030	2031-2035	2036-2040	2020-2040
Total Need	673	702	773	809	2,958
Total Owner Occupied	404	421	464	486	1,775
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	84	88	97	101	370
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	93	97	107	112	409
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	78	81	90	94	343
Market: \$250-\$350,000	95	99	109	114	416
High Market: Over \$350,000	54	56	62	65	237
Total Renter Occupied	269	281	309	324	1,183
Low: Less than \$500	58	60	66	69	253
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	147	153	169	177	646
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	77	81	89	93	339
High Market: \$1,500+	65	68	74	78	284

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Because of community input indicating a shortage of rental options outside of Ames and lack of recent construction, this model uses a new construction ratio of 60% owner-occupied, 40% renter-occupied split.

Price Point Needs

As Figure 4.4 shows, new housing needs to address attainability for all income ranges, and various housing types for all age ranges where people are in their lives. Some basic principles should be recognized in housing production at the indicated price points:

Low Income Housing Demand (renter <\$500). The lowest income households should be served primarily by the rental market. Several state and federal programs exist to support the development of low-income rental opportunities. Housing developers should have information on partnerships for these types of development, and the county/cities should coordinate with the developer on location and site design for the best outcome.

Low-Income Ownership Demand (owner <\$125,000). Often the best source of affordable housing is the existing housing stock in older neighborhoods. As stated in the housing gap chart in Chapter 2 (Figure 2.20), many moderate to higher-income households compete for the same housing stock as lower-income households. The lower-income ownership demand can be met, in part, by providing opportunities for moderate-income households to move-up in the market.

Moderate Income Demand (owner \$125,000-\$200,000; renter \$500-\$1,000).

The private market may achieve enough profits to support development in this market under certain situations and typically more for rental development. However, increasing construction costs are quickly making home construction priced in these ranges unfeasible. Little recent activity in this market is largely because of these hard costs and risks for the developer. These types of projects may require financial and logistical support from a city or Story County and its partners or production of less traditional attached or small lot owner-occupied units.

Market and High Market (owner >\$200,000; renter >\$1,000). The private market has been producing market-rate housing successfully but lower than demand. The development community should be encouraged to continue its work in market-rate housing development but work with a city or Story County and its partners to find new opportunities for other housing products and variety. This may require low-cost financing to achieve the desired housing product.

Using the Story County Development Program

In an ideal housing market, the supply and demand for housing units would naturally adjust over time to reach a balance where the supply of housing generally meets the demand for housing. Higher demand often triggers the market to supply more housing as builders and developers recognize possible profits. Profit positive development tends to be the case for several areas of Story County, but not all demand preferences and needs are being met. Barriers and inefficiencies in the local market lead to a market where demand preferences do not align with the aggregate supply. The Chapter 5 builds several principles to follow for a strategic housing implementation program.

COMMUNITY PROFILES

The previous sections refer to the aggregate need in Story County with some references to individual cities. The following sections provide detail and context for opportunities in every city. For the smallest cities, the information is a general assessment because of limited data and scope of demand.

NEVADA

Other than Ames, Nevada is the largest city in Story County. As the county seat, there are many services available in Nevada and many amenities that most households would demand. As indicated previously, Nevada is growing but at a slower rate than several other cities in Story County.

Characteristics

- From 2010-2018, Nevada saw an overall decrease in the population aged 25-54 and an overall increase in 55+ ages. However, there was a slight increase in the 35-44 age range.
- Renter occupancy fell slightly since 2010 by about 2.5 percentage points to 26% of all housing units. Vacancies are at a healthy rate of around 5%. The adequate vacancy provides options, but some indicated that older rental units are in poor condition and left unoccupied.
- The value to income ratio in Nevada indicates an overall affordable market. The ratio at 2.29 is stable since 2010. A value above 2.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile.



Figure 4.7: Housing Affordability, Nevada

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 44%	18.8%	519	>\$60,000	159	\$0-499	313	472	-47
\$25,000-49,999	44-86%	22.4%	619	\$60,000-124,999	766	\$500-999	384	1,150	531
\$50,000-74,999	87-129%	24.4%	674	\$125,000-199,999	769	\$1,000-1,499	11	780	106
\$75-99,999	130-173%	16.8%	464	\$200,000-249,999	136	\$1,500-1,999	0	136	-328
\$100-150,000	174-259%	11.0%	304	\$250,000-399,999	184	\$2,000-2,999	0	184	-120
\$150,000+	Over 259%	6.5%	179	\$400,000+	21	\$3000+	15	36	-143
Median	\$57,965			\$132,800		\$654			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.7 shows the how the existing housing stock meets the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 519 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 159 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 313 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 472 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (472) from the number of households in this income range (519), one can see that a gap of units exists.

In general, for Nevada:

- Many units in Nevada would be attainable for households making between \$25,000 and \$75,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that could be attainable for those making more than \$75,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$75,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$75,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.
- Note that units for those making less than \$25,000 only work through subsidy programs. Also, the gap for Nevada is not as high as Figure 4.5 shows because many are retirees with no income and paid off mortgages.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 0.44% from 1990-2018 is similar to the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019. Existing strong demand and proactive housing strategies forecast a 0.6% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.8).
- About 232 new housing units added through 2030 and 514 units through 2040 will accommodate a 0.6% growth rate. The 232 units through 2030 is 116 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.8).
- Of these 514 units, around 60% should be owner-occupied and 40% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.9).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA:

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.40 through 2030, decreasing to 2.35 through 2040.

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: Increases from 5% to 6% through 2030 with more housing options

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 2 per year

Figure 4.8: Nevada Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	6,853	7,061	7,275	7,496	7,724	
Household Population at End of Period	6,620	6,821	7,028	7,241	7,461	
Average People per Household	2.40	2.40	2.40	2.38	2.35	
Household Demand at End of Period	2,758	2,842	2,928	3,049	3,175	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	2,903	3,007	3,115	3,244	3,378	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		10	10	10	10	40
Cumulative Need During Period		114	118	138	144	514
Average Annual Construction		23	24	28	29	26

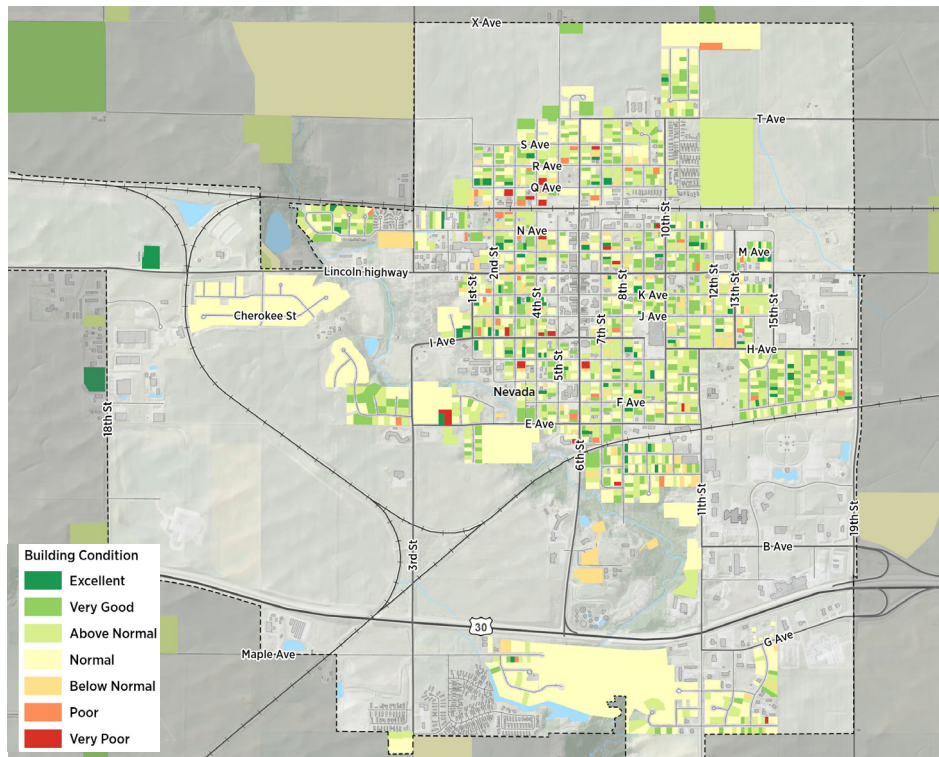
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.9: Nevada Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	514
Total Owner Occupied	309
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	85
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	93
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	64
Market: \$250-\$350,000	42
High Market: Over \$350,000	25
Total Renter Occupied	206
Low: Less than \$500	47
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	117
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	61
High Market: \$1,500+	42

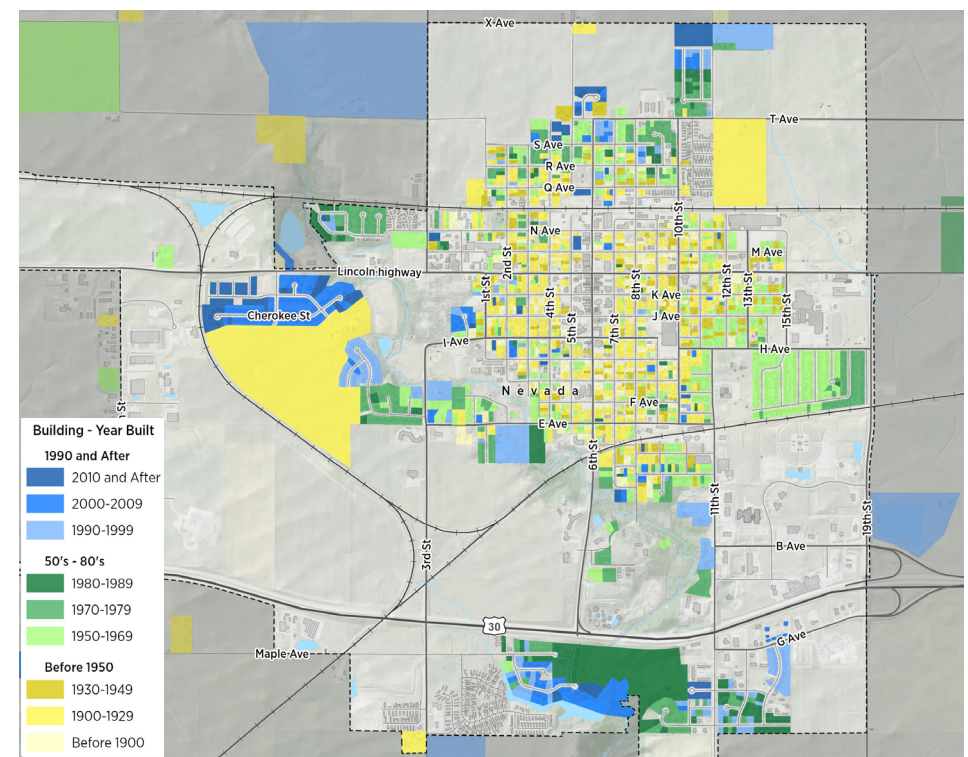
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.10: Building Condition, Nevada



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.11: Year Built, Nevada



Source: Story County Assessor

Themes and Opportunities

Neighborhood Conservation. There are healthy and thriving neighborhoods in Nevada. These areas include moderately priced existing homes constructed between the 1980s and 2000s. Several are along key entryways into Nevada and offer the first impression to visitors.

Local Action. Some new development in recent years is a result of local stakeholders recognizing an issue and acting. These efforts should be supported and encouraged in the future.

Housing Variety. Nevada historically has more housing variety than other cities in Story County. There are apartment complexes, duplexes, and other models that need to be targeted again to spur future development.

Growth Potential. There is a demand for new housing in Nevada. With few environmental constraints, there are ample land opportunities in the north and west portions of the city. Overcoming barriers with land acquisition, utility systems, and targeting housing variety is essential to fill the demand.

Manufactured Homes. The manufactured home development on the southwest end of town is a great model to create attainable housing options. The development could be expanded north if land becomes available for additional manufactured units. However, the manufactured home park on the northeast part of town is in poor condition and should be part of targeted repair programs or redevelopment.

HUXLEY

Huxley is the fastest growing city in Story County. While recent housing developments received incentives, market indicators show continued strong housing demand. Many choose to live in Huxley because of the proximity to Ames and Ankeny and the quality school district.

Characteristics

- From 2010-2018, Huxley's population aged 25-54 grew and with a lower increase in the population aged 55+.
- Renter occupancy fell substantially since 2010 by about 7.5 percentage points to 19.6% of all housing units. Vacancies, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, are non-existent, which echoes community conversations. However, there is likely at least some vacancy throughout the city.
- The value to income ratio in Huxley indicates overall affordability but approaching undervaluation. The ratio is at 2.24, dropping from 2.38 since 2010. A value under 3.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile, while under 2.0 indicates undervaluation that is difficult for market-rate construction.
 - › Huxley is unique in that the value to income ratio does not represent the actual characteristics happening in the city. The low ratio is a result of higher-income families moving to the community with the supply of new higher-end, market-rate housing lagging to catch up.



Figure 4.12: Housing Affordability, Huxley

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 29%	13.8%	182	>\$60,000	54	\$0-499	59	113	-69
\$25,000-49,999	29-55%	7.7%	102	\$60,000-124,999	112	\$500-999	138	250	148
\$50,000-74,999	56-83%	18.6%	245	\$125,000-199,999	434	\$1,000-1,499	12	446	201
\$75-99,999	84-111%	13.5%	178	\$200,000-249,999	197	\$1,500-1,999	30	227	49
\$100-150,000	112-166%	32.9%	434	\$250,000-399,999	217	\$2,000-2,999	19	236	-198
\$150,000+	Over 166%	13.5%	178	\$400,000+	47	\$3000+	0	47	-131
Median	\$90,393			\$184,500		\$706			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.12 shows the ability of the existing housing stock to meet the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 182 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 54 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 59 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 113 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (113) from the number of households in this income range (182), one can see that a gap of units exists.

In general, for Huxley:

- Many units would be attainable for households making between \$25,000 and \$100,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that would be attainable for those making more than \$100,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$100,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$100,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.
- Note that units for those making less than \$25,000 must use through subsidy programs. Like other cities, the gap is not as high as Figure 4.10 shows because many are retirees with no income and paid off mortgages.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 2.11% from 1990-2018 is lower than the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019 because growth accelerated in the last five years. Existing strong demand with proactive land development forecasts a 2.5% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.13).
- About 452 new housing units are needed through 2030 and 1,009 through 2040 to accommodate a 2.5% growth rate. The 452 units through 2030 is 102 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.13).
- Of these 1,009 units, around 60% should be owner-occupied and 40% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.14).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.80

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: increases from 4% to 6% through 2040 with more housing options

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 2 per year

Figure 4.13: Huxley Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	3,867	4,375	4,950	5,601	6,337	
Household Population at End of Period	3,867	4,375	4,950	5,601	6,337	
Average People per Household	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	
Household Demand at End of Period	1,381	1,563	1,768	2,000	2,263	
Projected Vacancy Rate	4.0%	4.8%	5.5%	5.8%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	1,439	1,641	1,871	2,122	2,408	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		10	10	10	10	40
Cumulative Need During Period		212	240	261	295	1,009
Average Annual Construction		42	48	52	59	50

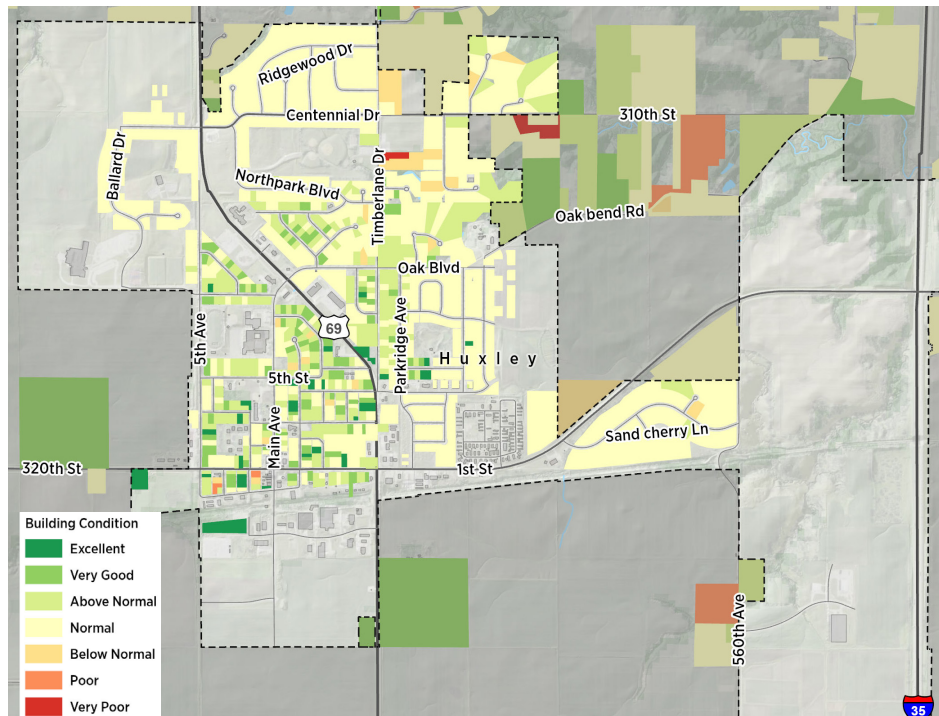
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.14: Huxley Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	1,009
Total Owner Occupied	605
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	54
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	130
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	95
Market: \$250-\$350,000	231
High Market: Over \$350,000	95
Total Renter Occupied	404
Low: Less than \$500	104
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	198
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	140
High Market: \$1,500+	102

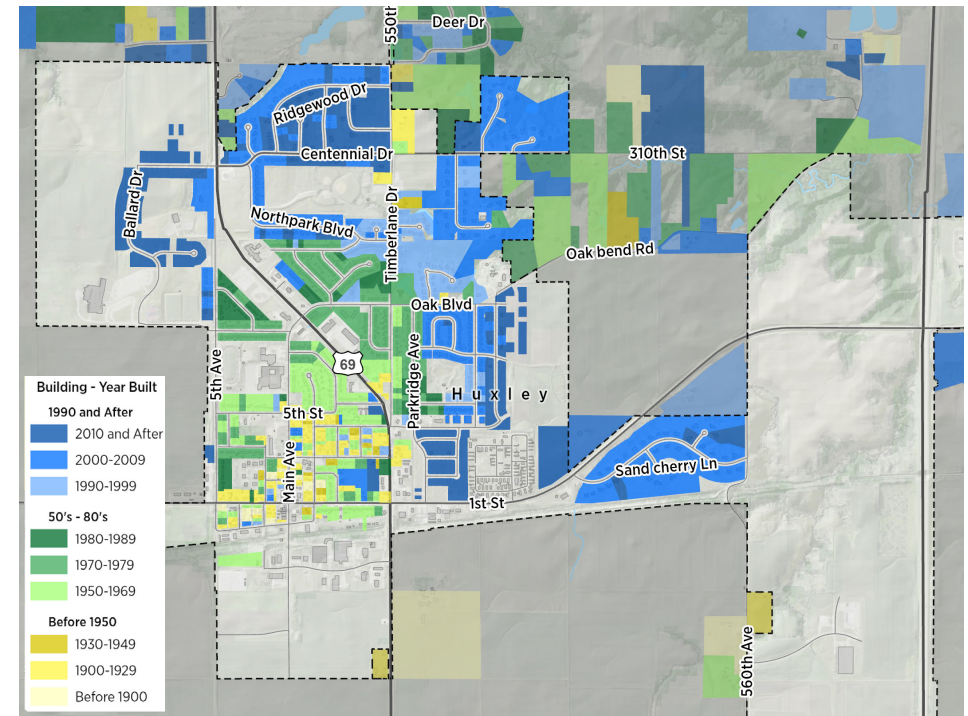
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.15: Building Condition, Huxley



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.16: Year Built, Huxley



Source: Story County Assessor

Themes and Opportunities

Development Interest. There is strong interest from builders and developers to construct homes in Huxley. The history of tax abatements provided by the city is part of the reason. However, the market can hold its own without the abatements because Huxley is a desirable city for many households. Interest in new construction will continue in the future.

Neighborhood Growth. There are many potential areas for new subdivisions that do not have environmental barriers. A key will be securing these areas for urban development before large lot county development surrounds the city on the north. New neighborhoods need to be well planned with connections, parks, trails, and varying lot sizes to maintain the character of Huxley.

Conserve Old Town. The area south of the middle school is the old town center. It is vital to maintain these homes as attainable options for entry-level housing. The existing manufactured home park is also a quality attainable neighborhood for the community.

STORY CITY

Story City anchors the northern portion of Story County. There are good community services in Story City. Growth in the past has been moderate and static since 2010. Its location along Interstate 35 provides easy access to many employment centers in the region.

Characteristics

- From 2010-2018, Story City's population aged 25-54 declined but grew in the 0-24 and 55+ age cohorts.
- Renter occupancy grew slightly since 2010 by about three percentage points to 33% of all housing units. The share of rental occupancy is higher than most other cities in Story County. Vacancies, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, are stable at around 6%. The vacancy provides options is a healthy vacancy rate.
- The value to income ratio in Story City indicates overall affordability. The ratio is at 2.29, dropping from 2.63 since 2010. A value under 3.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile, while under 2.0 indicates undervaluation that is difficult for market-rate construction.



Figure 4.17: Housing Affordability, Story City

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 39%	21.1%	293	>\$60,000	46	\$0-499	116	162	-131
\$25,000-49,999	39-76%	20.4%	284	\$60,000-124,999	296	\$500-999	277	573	289
\$50,000-74,999	77-114%	14.0%	195	\$125,000-199,999	359	\$1,000-1,499	14	373	178
\$75-99,999	115-152%	20.2%	281	\$200,000-249,999	128	\$1,500-1,999	0	128	-153
\$100-150,000	153-228%	19.3%	269	\$250,000-399,999	66	\$2,000-2,999	29	95	-174
\$150,000+	Over 228%	5.0%	69	\$400,000+	28	\$3000+	31	59	-10
Median	\$65,893			\$150,900		\$616			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.17 shows the ability of the existing housing stock to meet the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 293 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 46 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 116 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 162 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (162) from the number of households in this income range (293), one can see that a gap of units exists.

In general, for Story City:

- Many units would be attainable for households making between \$25,000 and \$75,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that would be attainable for those making more than \$75,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$75,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$75,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.
- Note that units for those making less than \$25,000 must come through subsidy programs. Like other cities, the real gap is not as high as Figure 4.15 shows because many are retirees with no income and paid off mortgages.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 0.49% from 1990-2018 is higher than the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019, perhaps because of increases in household size or the drop in the vacancy rate indicated from 2010 to 2018. Existing demand with proactive housing strategies forecasts a 0.6% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.18).
- About 113 new housing units through 2030 and 232 units through 2040 would accommodate a 0.6% growth rate. The 113 units through 2030 is 62 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.18).
- Of these 232 units, around 60% should be owner-occupied and 40% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.19).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.30

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: Steady at 6% like existing conditions

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 2 per year

Figure 4.18: Story City Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	3,418	3,522	3,629	3,739	3,852	
Household Population at End of Period	3,270	3,370	3,472	3,577	3,686	
Average People per Household	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.30	
Household Demand at End of Period	1,422	1,465	1,510	1,555	1,603	
Projected Vacancy Rate	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	1,513	1,559	1,606	1,655	1,705	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		10	10	10	10	40
Cumulative Need During Period		56	57	59	60	232
Average Annual Construction		11	11	12	12	12

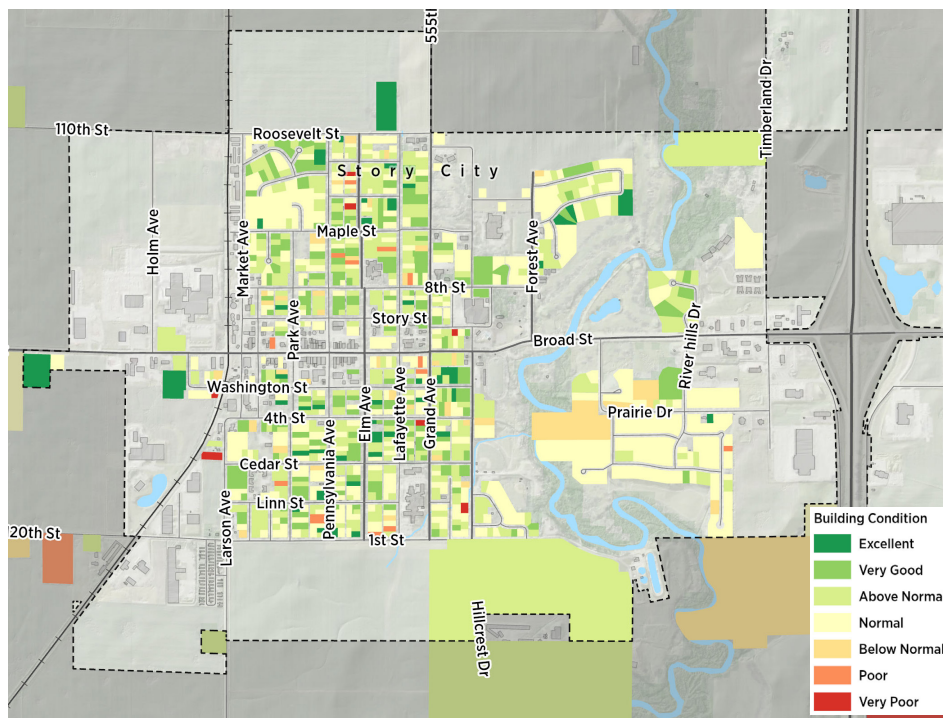
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.19: Story City Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	232
Total Owner Occupied	139
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	36
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	25
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	36
Market: \$250-\$350,000	34
High Market: Over \$350,000	9
Total Renter Occupied	93
Low: Less than \$500	26
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	42
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	17
High Market: \$1,500+	12

Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.19: Building Condition, Story City



Source: Story County Assessor

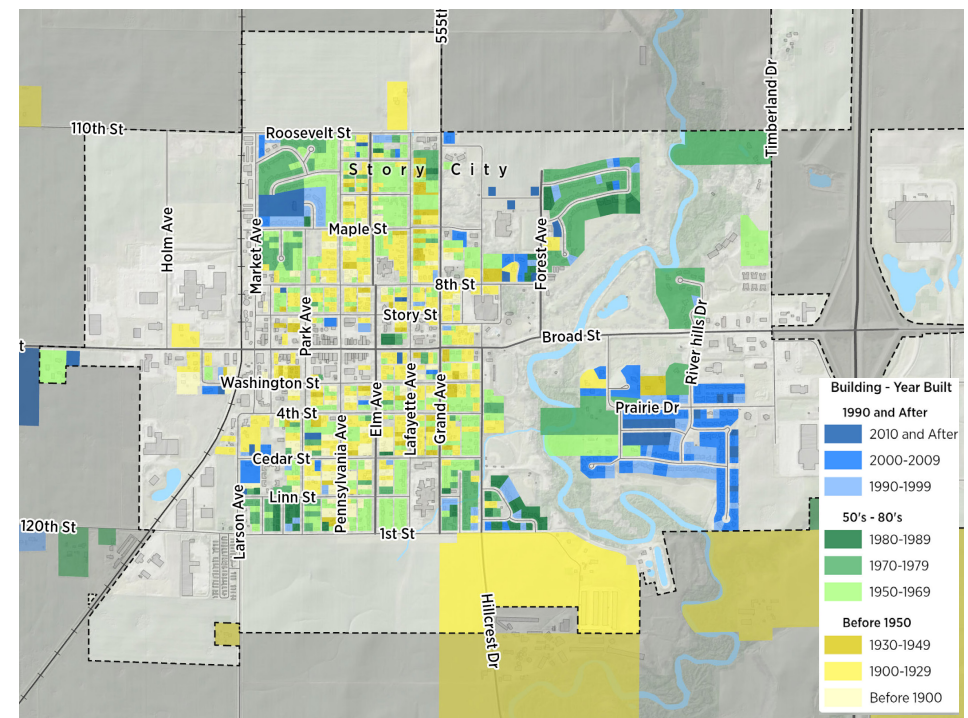
Themes and Opportunities

Good Conditions. Homes in Story City are in above average condition and provide a great first impression of the community. Conserving the existing housing stock is a priority that should not be overlooked when focusing on new housing development.

Housing Variety. Story City contains more housing variety than many other cities in Story County. Assisted living models, duplexes, and multi-family areas are relatively new developments in the city and opportunities to continue to target for new development to meet demand.

Community Connections. The South Skunk River creates a split between industry and new commercial and the traditional town center. However, the river also splits the broader city from newer housing developments. Ensuring connections (trails, greenways, roads) between new development and the town core are essential for access to amenities.

Figure 4.20: Year Built, Story City



Source: Story County Assessor

New Development. There are several feasible areas for new development but limited availability. Incentive programs or cost-sharing programs for infrastructure could be enough to spur developer interest in these areas. The smaller lot sizes of past developments are a fiscally responsible model to continue in new developments.

SLATER

Slater is in the far southwest portion of Story County, a prime location between Ankeny and Ames. Two significant trails intersect in the city to bring many visitors, the High Trestle Trail and Heart of Iowa Trail. Growth is steadily increasing in Slater.

Characteristics

- From 2010-2018, Slater's population aged 25-54 declined slightly but grew in the 0-24 and 55+ age cohorts.
- Renter occupancy grew slightly since 2010 by about 1.3 percentage points to 20% of all housing units. The share of rental occupancy is comparable to other smaller cities in Story County. Vacancies, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, are stable at around 4-5%. The adequate vacancy provides options, and a healthy rate is between 5%-6%.
- The value to income ratio in Slater indicates overall affordability. The ratio is at 2.23, dropping from 3.09 since 2010. A value under 3.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile, while under 2.0 indicates undervaluation that is difficult for market-rate construction.
 - › Like Huxley, the significant drop in the ratio comes from higher-income families moving to the community with the supply of new higher-end, market-rate housing lagging to catch up.



Figure 4.22: Housing Affordability, Slater

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 36%	8.9%	52	>\$60,000	49	\$0-499	22	71	19
\$25,000-49,999	36-70%	22.2%	130	\$60,000-124,999	83	\$500-999	90	173	43
\$50,000-74,999	71-105%	21.2%	124	\$125,000-199,999	187	\$1,000-1,499	3	190	66
\$75-99,999	106-140%	15.0%	88	\$200,000-249,999	97	\$1,500-1,999	2	99	11
\$100-150,000	141-211%	25.8%	151	\$250,000-399,999	47	\$2,000-2,999	0	47	-104
\$150,000+	Over 211%	6.8%	40	\$400,000+	5	\$3000+	0	5	-35
Median	\$71,250			\$159,200		\$599			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.22 shows the ability of the existing housing stock to meet the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 52 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 49 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 22 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 71 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (71) from the number of households in this income range (52), one can see that enough units exist.

In general, for Slater:

- Some units would be attainable for households making up to \$100,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that would be attainable for those making more than \$100,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$100,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$100,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.
- Note that units for those making less than \$25,000 appears adequate, but this does not indicate the quality of these units.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 0.73% from 1990-2018 is higher than the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019, perhaps because of larger household sizes from more families moving into the city from 2010 to 2018. Existing demand with proactive housing and land growth strategies forecasts a 0.98% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.23).
- About 82 new housing units added through 2030 and 196 through 2040 would accommodate a 0.98% growth rate. The 82 units through 2030 is 47 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.23).
- Of these 196 units, around 60% should be owner-occupied and 40% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.24).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.60 through 2030, decreasing to 2.50 through 2040.

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: Increasing from 5% to 6% through 2030 with more housing options.

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 1 per year

Figure 4.23: Slater Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	1,575	1,653	1,735	1,822	1,913	
Household Population at End of Period	1,575	1,653	1,735	1,822	1,913	
Average People per Household	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.55	2.50	
Household Demand at End of Period	606	636	667	715	765	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	637	673	710	760	814	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		5	5	5	5	20
Cumulative Need During Period		40	42	55	59	196
Average Annual Construction		8	8	11	12	10

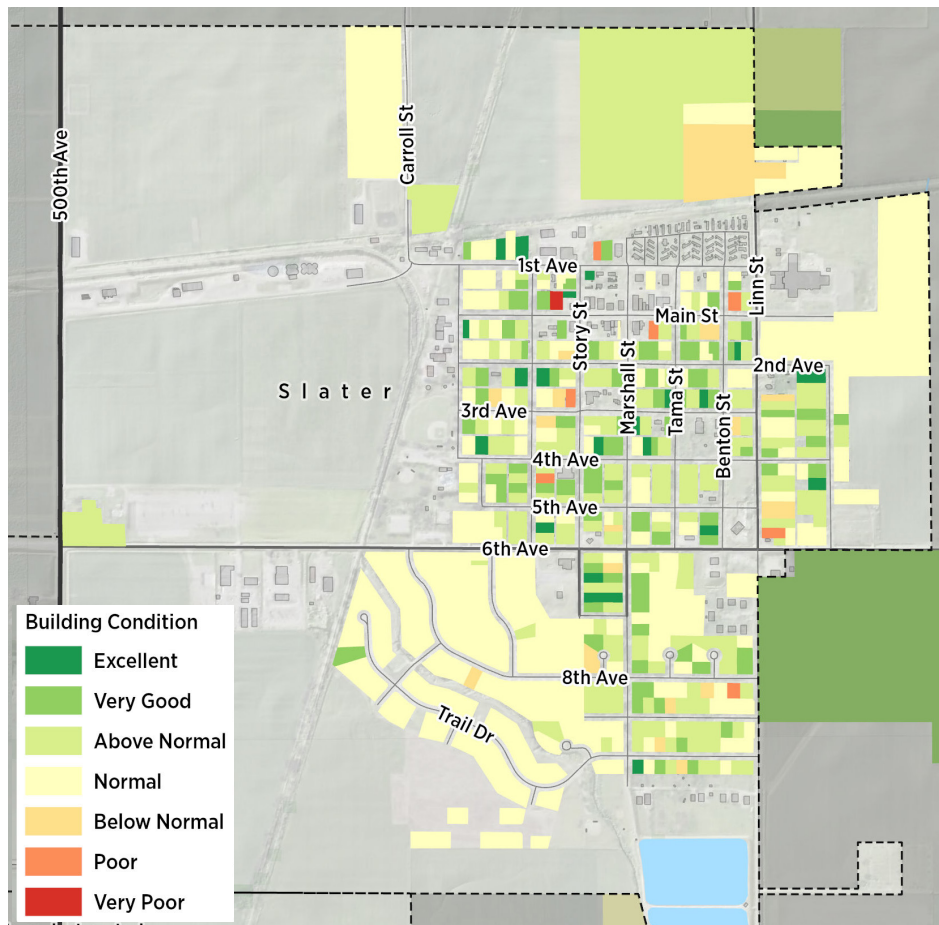
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.24: Slater Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	196
Total Owner Occupied	118
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	29
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	27
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	19
Market: \$250-\$350,000	33
High Market: Over \$350,000	9
Total Renter Occupied	79
Low: Less than \$500	10
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	51
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	25
High Market: \$1,500+	18

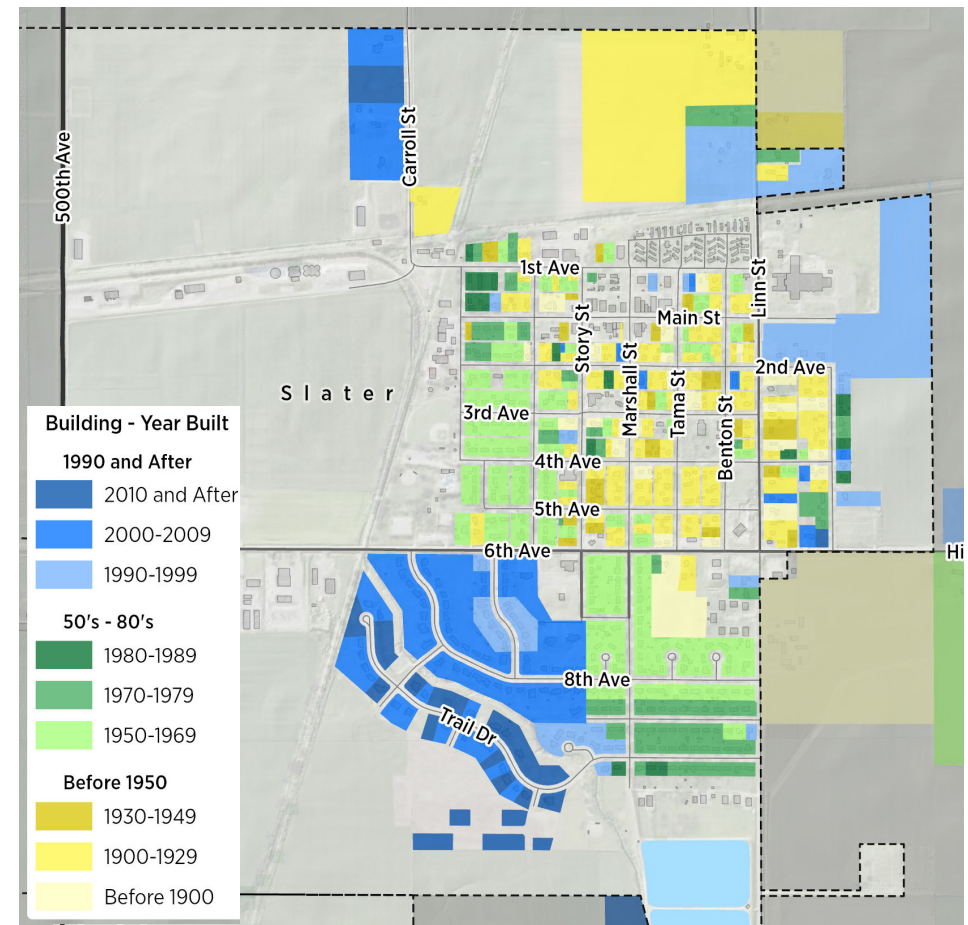
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.25: Building Condition, Slater



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.26: Year Built, Slater



Source: Story County Assessor

Themes and Opportunities

Quality Housing. Homes in Slater are in good condition. Significant rehabilitation need does not exist for very many homes and is secluded to areas around downtown. Efforts developed by the City or county wide should work to prevent existing homes from reaching a state of dilapidation.

Local Amenities. Slater is close to larger cities but also has many services locally. The downtown is in good shape and the intersection of the High Trestle Trail and Heart of Iowa Trail offers prominent tourism opportunities that many communities of its size do not have. The presence of an elementary school also adds to the appeal of Slater to family households.

New Development. There is demonstrated new construction happening in Slater from two small housing developments and there are other areas feasible for new development. Lot sizes for recent development are manageable from a cost/benefit perspective. Smaller lot sizes create more benefits for the community and Story County housing demand to provide infrastructure effectively.

GILBERT

Gilbert is the closest city to Ames and attractive for many families because of the smaller school district. A recent new school building and land opportunities make Gilbert poised for continued growth.

Characteristics

- Census estimates have larger margins of error for Gilbert because of its smaller size and rapid changes. For example, the Census Population Estimates Program has a 2018 population at 1,140, while the 2018 American Community Survey states a population of 955. Construction rates indicate a population at above 1,140.
- Renter occupancy fell slightly since 2010 by about one percentage point to 17.7% of all housing units. The share of rental occupancy is comparable to other smaller cities in Story County. Vacancies, according to the 2018 American Community Survey, remain low at under 4%. The adequate vacancy provides options, and a healthy rate is between 5%-6%.
- The value to income ratio in Gilbert indicates overall affordability. The ratio is at 2.23, increasing from 2.04 since 2010. A value under 3.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile, while under 2.0 indicates undervaluation that is difficult for market-rate construction.
 - › Recent new construction has brought the ratio up to levels that make building less risky for developers as they know homes will appraise at or above cost.



Figure 4.27: Housing Affordability, Gilbert

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 30%	7.7%	26	>\$60,000	0	\$0-499	15	15	-11
\$25,000-49,999	30-57%	13.6%	46	\$60,000-124,999	35	\$500-999	40	75	29
\$50,000-74,999	58-86%	18.0%	61	\$125,000-199,999	112	\$1,000-1,499	3	115	54
\$75-99,999	87-114%	18.6%	63	\$200,000-249,999	82	\$1,500-1,999	2	84	21
\$100-150,000	115-172%	28.0%	95	\$250,000-399,999	46	\$2,000-2,999	0	46	-49
\$150,000+	Over 172%	14.2%	48	\$400,000+	4	\$3000+	0	4	-44
Median	\$87,375			\$194,900		\$690			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.27 shows the ability of the existing housing stock to meet the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 26 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 0 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 15 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 15 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (15) from the number of households in this income range (26), one can see that a gap exists. However, the effect in a community the size of Gilbert is minimal as much of the gap is likely retirees with smaller incomes and a paid-off mortgage.

In general, for Gilbert:

- Some units would be attainable for households making up to \$100,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that would be attainable for those making more than \$100,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$100,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$100,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 1.29% from 1990-2018 is lower than the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019, partially because of a slight increase in vacancy, but also because 2018 population estimates may be low. Existing demand with proactive housing and land growth strategies forecasts a 1.5% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.28).
- About 88 new housing units need to be added through 2030 and 186 units through 2040 to accommodate a 1.5% growth rate. The 88 units through 2030 is 25 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.28).
- Of these 186 units, around 70% should be owner-occupied and 30% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.29).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.80

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: Increasing from 3.5% to 6% through 2040 with more housing options.

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 1 per year

Figure 4.28: Gilbert Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	1,175	1,266	1,364	1,469	1,583	
Household Population at End of Period	1,175	1,266	1,364	1,469	1,583	
Average People per Household	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	2.80	
Household Demand at End of Period	420	452	487	525	565	
Projected Vacancy Rate	3.5%	4.3%	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	435	472	513	555	601	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		5	5	5	5	20
Cumulative Need During Period		42	46	48	51	186
Average Annual Construction		8	9	10	10	9

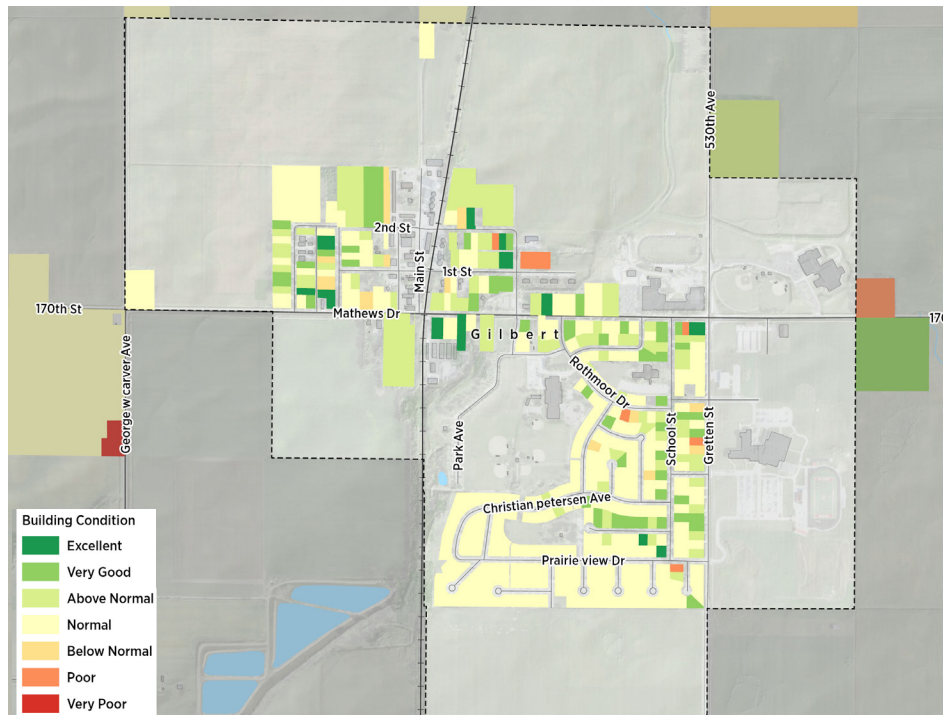
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.29: Gilbert Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	186
Total Owner Occupied	130
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	19
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	25
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	26
Market: \$250-\$350,000	40
High Market: Over \$350,000	20
Total Renter Occupied	56
Low: Less than \$500	7
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	31
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	17
High Market: \$1,500+	18

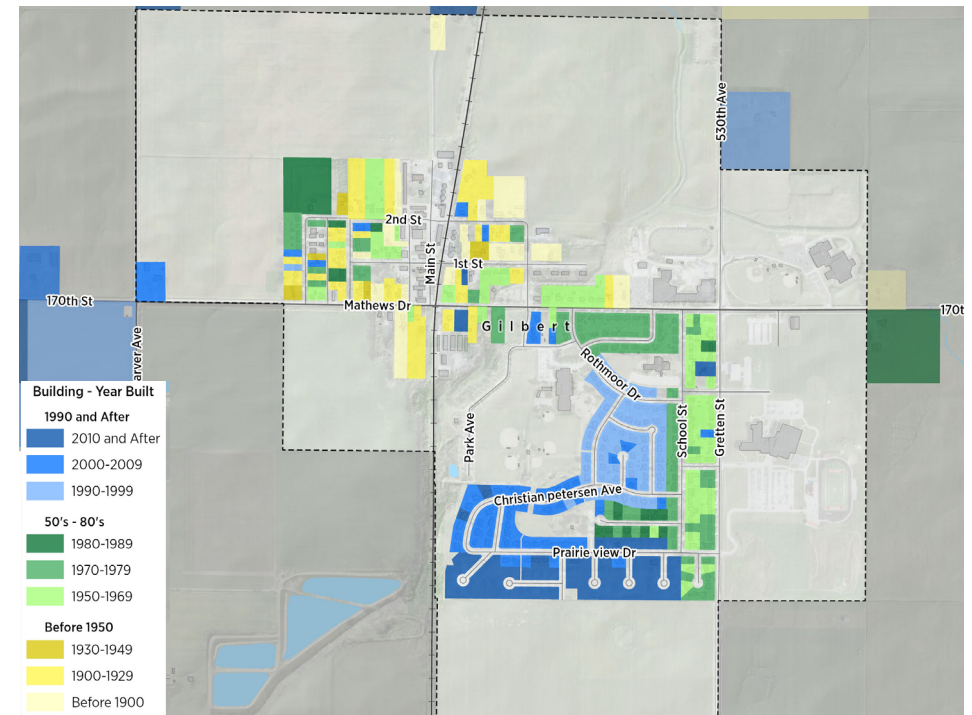
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.30: Building Condition, Gilbert



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.31: Year Built, Gilbert



Source: Story County Assessor

Themes and Opportunities

New versus Old. Gilbert shows characteristics of a suburb where there is an older town center and new subdivisions sprouting at the peripheries. Both are important for the future of the city.

Rehabilitation. While much of the housing stock is in good condition or new, areas in the core require attention ranging from minor to major reinvestment. A targeted rehabilitation program would repair/stabilize participating homes.

Lack of Variety. There are not many different housing types in Gilbert. Single-family homes dominate the new construction market. While its proximity to Ames may relieve some of the pressure, future construction should aim to provide some attached or multi-family models to support people working in the community, such as entry-level teachers and maintenance staff.

School Pride. The Gilbert School district is a main reason for living in Gilbert. The school improvements is a factor in the market for new subdivisions in the future and pressure for the annexation of more land.

ROLAND

Roland is a smaller community in northern Story County and is home to a middle school. There is ample land within city limits for growth but a declining population in the recent decade.

Characteristics

- Census estimates have larger margins of error for Roland because of its smaller size and rapid changes. There were population declines between 2000 and 2010, and 2010 and the 2018 estimated population. However, construction rates would indicate population growth since 2010.
- Renter occupancy rose since 2010 by about six percentage points to 20% of all housing units. These were in the form of mostly single-family homes converted to rentals. The share of rental occupancy is comparable to other smaller cities in Story County. Vacancies according to the 2018 American Community Survey, fell to 3.2% since 2010. Vacancy provides options and a healthy rate is between 5%-6%.
- The value to income ratio in Roland indicates an undervalued market. The ratio is at 1.88, dropping from 2.16 since 2010. A value under 3.0 means the market should produce valuations that make development worthwhile, while under 2.0 indicates undervaluation that is difficult for market-rate construction.
 - › The low value means it may be difficult for builders to construct a house in many areas of the city that will appraise at a value that equals construction costs.



Figure 4.32: Housing Affordability, Roland

Income Range	% of City Median	% of Households	# Households in Each Range	Affordable Range for Owner Units	# of Owner Units	Affordable Range for Renter Units	# of Renter Units	Total Affordable Units	Balance
\$0-25,000	Under 35%	12.2%	58	>\$60,000	16	\$0-499	53	69	11
\$25,000-49,999	35-67%	21.8%	104	\$60,000-124,999	133	\$500-999	35	168	64
\$50,000-74,999	68-101%	16.8%	80	\$125,000-199,999	154	\$1,000-1,499	8	162	82
\$75-99,999	102-135%	17.8%	85	\$200,000-249,999	58	\$1,500-1,999	0	58	-27
\$100-150,000	136-202%	21.2%	101	\$250,000-399,999	20	\$2,000-2,999	0	20	-81
\$150,000+	Over 202%	10.3%	49	\$400,000+	0	\$3000+	0	0	-49
Median	\$74,271			\$139,800		\$491			

Source: American Community Survey 2014-2018; RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.32 shows the ability of the existing housing stock to meet the financial ability of existing households. For example, using the income range of \$0-24,999.

1. There are 58 households living within this income range.
2. An affordable home for purchase would cost a maximum of \$60,000. There are an estimated 16 owner-occupied units within this value range.
3. An affordable rental unit should cost no more than \$500 per month. There are an estimated 53 rental units within this price range.
4. Combined, there are a total of 69 units that should be affordable for households earning less than \$24,999 per year. By subtracting the supply of affordable units (69) from the number of households in this income range (58), one can see that enough homes exist. However, the positive number does not indicate the quality of the units.

In general, for Roland:

- Some units would be attainable for households making up to \$75,000 a year.
- However, there are not enough units that would be attainable for those making more than \$75,000 per year.
- Many households making more than \$75,000 per year have no choice but to live in units (owner and renter) also attainable to those making less than \$75,000. Thus, these two income groups compete for the same housing product even though one could afford higher price point options if available.

Market Forecast

- The annual population growth rate of 0.63% from 1990-2018 is higher than the growth rate based on residential construction from 2010-2019. However, the population change between 2000 and 2018 is negative. The construction activity since 2010 may not be captured in the 2018 population estimates, especially when seeing the vacancy rate also decline since 2010. Existing demand with proactive housing and land growth strategies forecasts a 0.4% annual growth rate through 2040 (Figure 4.33).
- About 36 new housing units added through 2030 and 90 units through 2040 would accommodate a 0.4% growth rate. The 36 units through 2030 is 15 more residential units than constructed from 2010-2019 (Figure 4.33).
- Of these 90 units, around 60% should be owner-occupied and 40% rental occupied. Renter occupied does not mean only apartments, but could also include duplex, townhome, or accessory dwelling unit models (Figure 4.34).

HOUSING DEMAND CRITERIA

PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD: Constant at 2.60 through 2030, decreasing to 2.50 through 2040.

POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS: Constant ratio

VACANCY RATE: Increasing from 5% to 6% through 2030 with more housing options.

DEMOLISHED UNITS: 1 per year

Figure 4.33: Roland Housing Needs

	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total
Population at End of Period	1,243	1,268	1,294	1,320	1,347	
Household Population at End of Period	1,243	1,268	1,294	1,320	1,347	
Average People per Household	2.60	2.60	2.60	2.55	2.50	
Household Demand at End of Period	478	488	498	518	539	
Projected Vacancy Rate	5.0%	5.5%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	
Unit Needs at End of Period	503	516	529	551	573	
Replacement Need (total lost units)		5	5	5	5	20
Cumulative Need During Period		18	18	26	27	90
Average Annual Construction		4	4	5	5	4

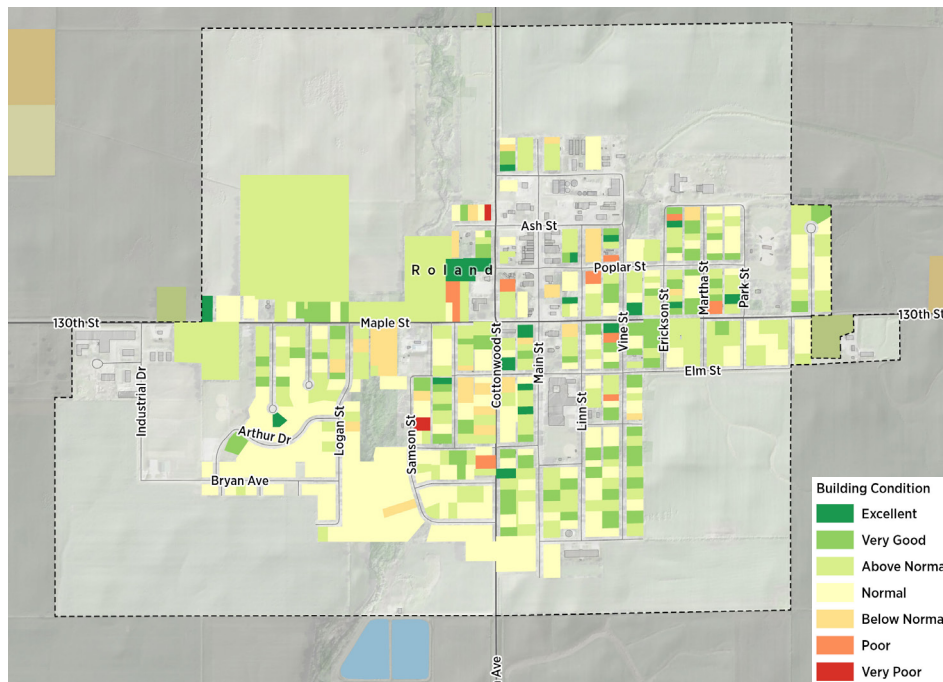
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.34: Roland Housing Development Program

	2020-2040
Total Need	90
Total Owner Occupied	54
Affordable Low: <\$125,000	13
Affordable Moderate: \$125-\$200,000	10
Moderate Market: \$200-\$250,000	11
Market: \$250-\$350,000	13
High Market: Over \$350,000	6
Total Renter Occupied	36
Low: Less than \$500	6
Affordable: \$500-\$1,000	20
Market: \$1,000-\$1,500	9
High Market: \$1,500+	9

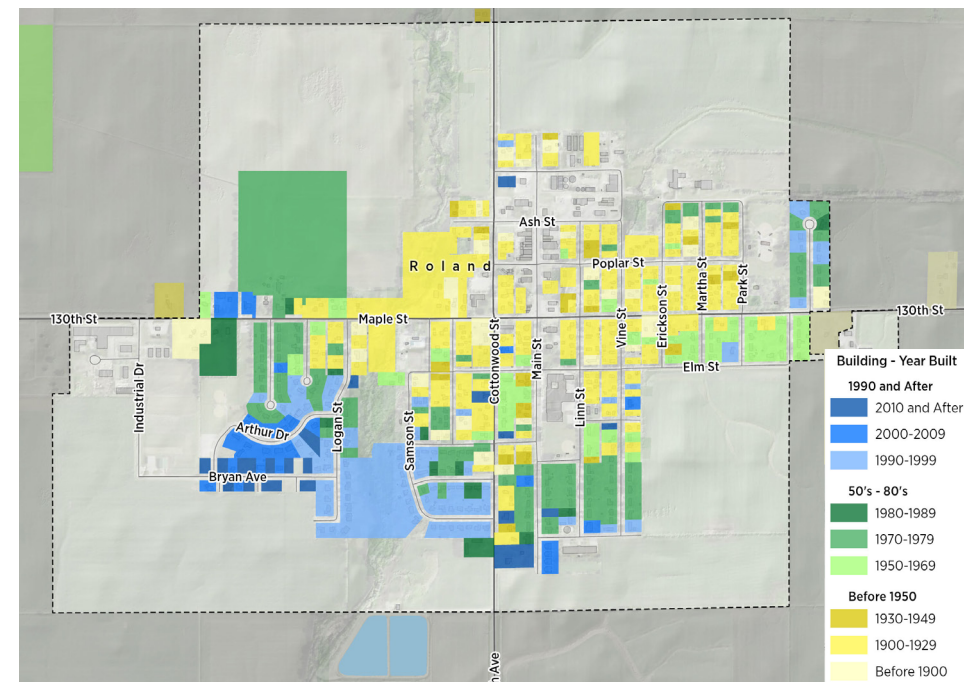
Source: RDG Planning & Design

Figure 4.35: Building Condition, Roland



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.36: Year Built, Roland



Source: Story County Assessor

Themes and Opportunities

Varying Housing Conditions. While much of the housing stock is in good condition, select areas require attention ranging from minor to major reinvestment.

Past Development Success. There is evidence of relatively recent subdivision development in the southwest part of town with a few lots left to build out. Fortunately, the subdivision leaves the opportunity to continue south should land become available.

Strong Downtown and School. Roland has the traditional small-town Iowa components and opportunities that appeal to households. Maintaining and increasing these types of amenities will position Roland for stable growth in the future.

CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge is a small community and data is not as widely available for reliable use. However, local information and conversations still provide themes and opportunities for the city in the future.

Cambridge has a small downtown and an elementary school within the Ballard School District. Its strategic location near Huxley and Interstate 35 gives the potential for higher future growth. Growth in recent decades did slightly increase.

2010 POPULATION: 827

MEDIAN AGE: 33.1

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.7; Renter/2.63

OWNER/RENTER: 82.6/17.4

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.10% annually

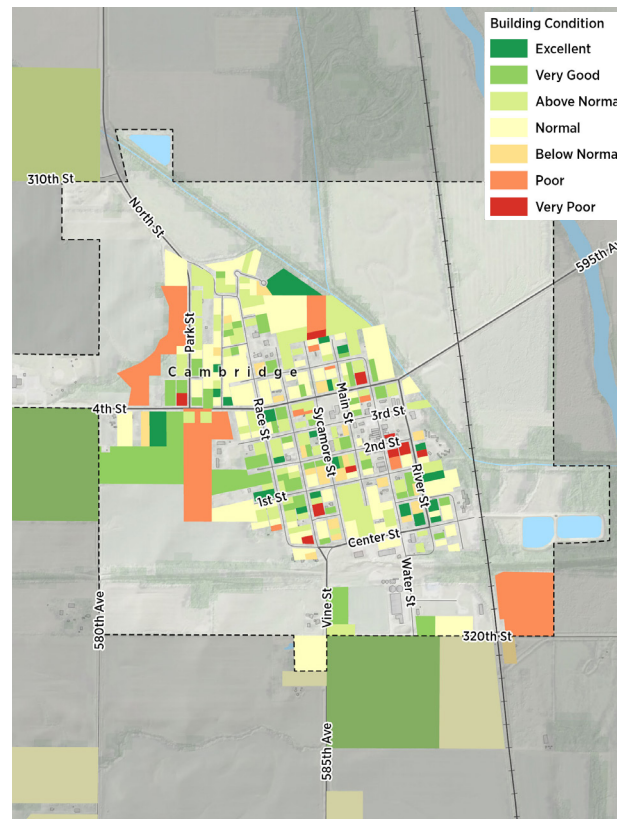
Conditions and Permit Activity

Homes in Cambridge are in good condition with select instances of visible rehabilitation need. Even though the population increased from 1990 to 2010, only two new single-family homes were built since 2010. Much of the population growth may be from larger household sizes.

Opportunities

Strategic Location. Cambridge's location in the southern part of Story County with a school in the community increases future housing demand. The demand for new housing units could be more than the two units saw between 2010 and 2019, with a new wastewater treatment plant recently constructed.

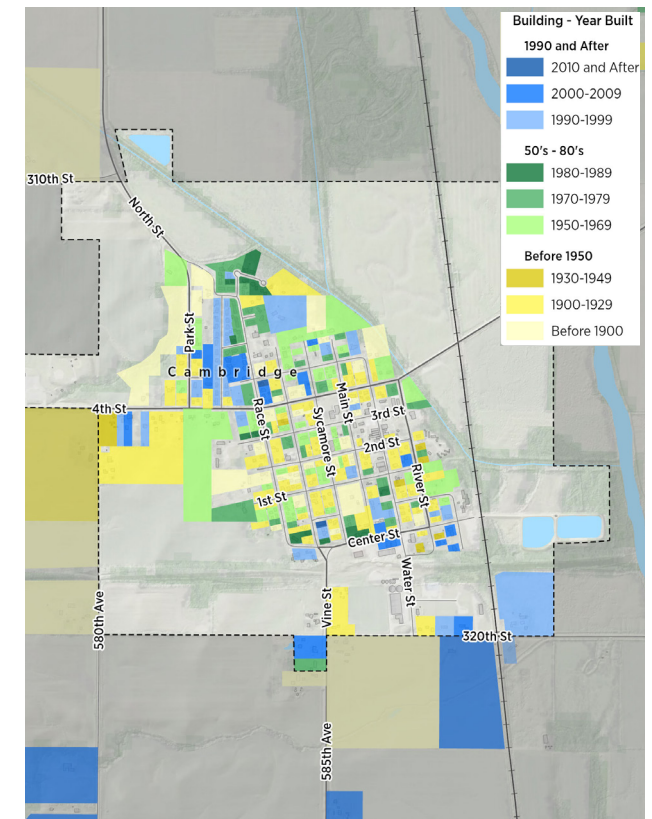
Figure 4.37: Building Condition, Cambridge



Source: Story County Assessor

Land Opportunities. The north and east areas around Cambridge are in the floodplain. However, land in the southwest has few environmental barriers. Areas east of 580th Avenue near the Heart of Iowa Trail and areas around the elementary school are logical areas for new subdivision development with targeted programs to help acquire land for development.

Figure 4.38: Year Built, Cambridge



Source: Story County Assessor

Redevelopment/Demolition. There is not a significant need for demolition in Cambridge. Demolition should be pursued only if there are no other investment options for rehabilitation, especially because much of the existing housing value is priced below what new construction can achieve. Redevelopment is an option for vacant buildings downtown, like the previous renovation of the old opera house into apartments.

COLLINS

Like many communities in Iowa, Collins is a small but stable community with a school. The population continues to grow in Collins with ongoing building permit activity in recent years. There are land opportunities that poise Collins for more future growth.

2010 POPULATION: 495

MEDIAN AGE: 34.2

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.64; Renter/1.96

OWNER/RENTER: 76.8/23.2

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.25% annually

Conditions and Permit Activity

Homes in Collins are in average condition with more rehabilitation needs than other communities in the county. Five new single-family units added between 2010 and 2019 were on existing lots and not from subdivision development.

Figure 4.39: Building Condition, Collins



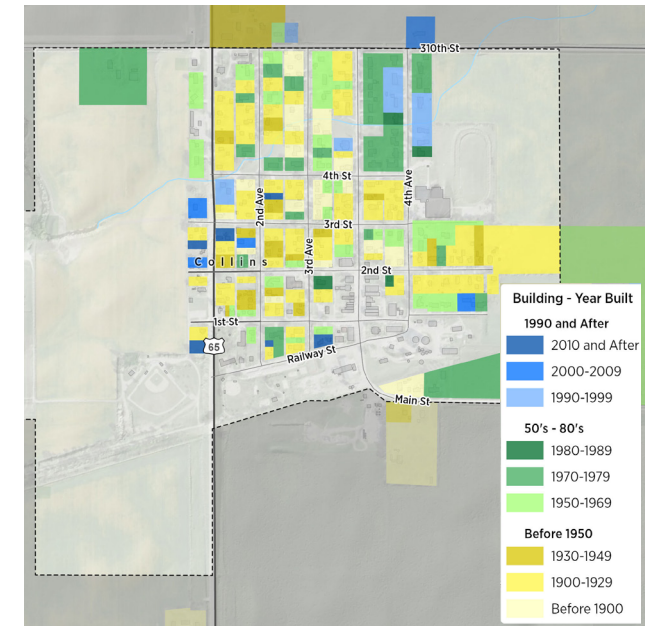
Source: Story County Assessor

Opportunities

Existing School. Areas around the elementary school are higher valued and could be an opportunity for new housing development.

Downtown. Downtown is healthy and a positive amenity for the community. With the right partner and incentives, some buildings could contain housing opportunities.

Figure 4.40: Year Built, Collins



Source: Story County Assessor

Redevelopment/Demolition. There is no significant need for demolition in Collins, only in areas where flooding renders homes inhabitable. The lower assessed value of some homes does indicate rehabilitation needs for some properties to maintain their appeal for new households in the future.

COLO

Colo is a growing community along Highway 30 with the Junior/Senior High School of the Colo-NESCO school district. The growth is despite little residential construction activity in recent years. Like other communities in Story County, there are ample growth opportunities if property owners are willing to sell.

2010 POPULATION: 876

MEDIAN AGE: 38.1

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.59; Renter/2.37

OWNER/RENTER: 71.4/28.6

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.10% annually

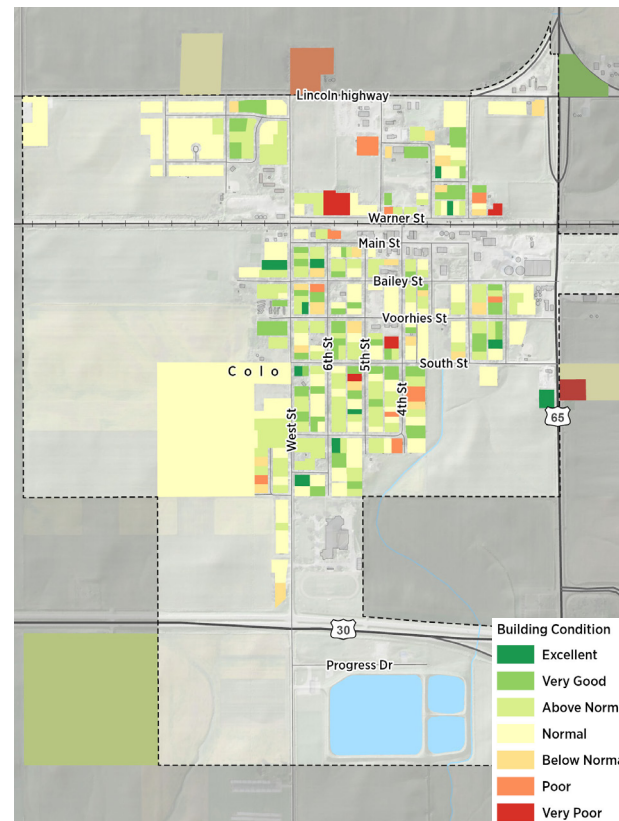
Conditions and Permit Activity

Colo has more visible rehabilitation needs than other communities in Story County, but still fair condition housing compared to other rural communities in Iowa. New development activity is not happening, with the last development occurring in the northwest part of town.

Opportunities

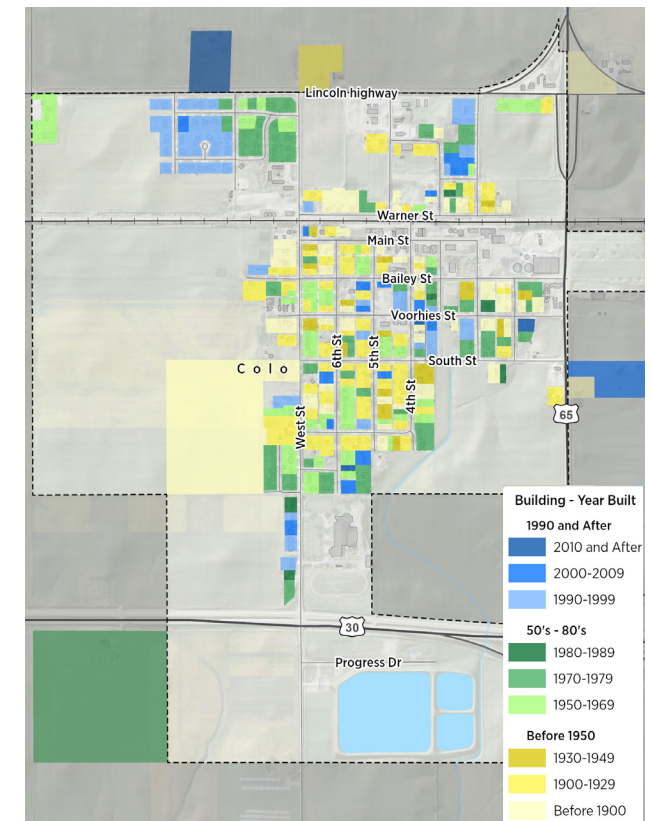
School Site. Many communities see housing growth happen around schools. Colo has not necessarily seen this happen, which may be attributed to land ownership. However, a new bond to renovate the school could change the potential. The area around the school would be more enticing to a builder for valuation and family appeal. Incentive programs or cost-sharing programs for infrastructure could be enough to spur developer interest.

Figure 4.41: Building Condition, Colo



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.42: Year Built, Colo



Source: Story County Assessor

Targeted Rehabilitation. Colo does need to have resources available for home up-keep. Existing programs at the County level should be advertised more regularly to homeowners, especially the elderly. Chapter 5 provides more detail on where to expand programs to more households.

KELLEY

Kelley is one of the smallest communities in Story County with few local services. However, Kelley is also one of the closest communities to Ames. As a result, the population grew slightly since 1990 with some residential construction activity since 2010. Kelley will continue to serve the needs of people that desire more rural living but the convenience of being close to Ames.

2010 POPULATION: 309

MEDIAN AGE: 31.8

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.57; Renter/2.42

OWNER/RENTER: 75.9/24.1

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.25% annually

Conditions and Permit Activity

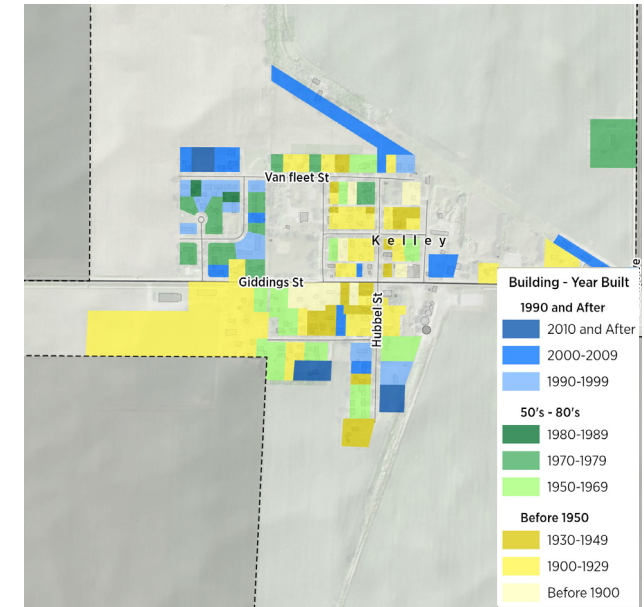
Homes are older and in average condition with no extremely poor condition homes. There were three new homes constructed in the past ten years. Three may not seem like a lot, but any construction is a success in a community the size of Kelley. Three homes built in Kelly is like over 65 homes constructed in a city the size of Nevada.

Figure 4.43: Building Condition, Kelley



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.44: Year Built, Kelley



Source: Story County Assessor

Opportunities

Conservation. There are a few instances in Kelley where housing is starting to show its age. These areas are appropriate for moderate home repair programs that assist and stimulate homeowners to undertake necessary maintenance, such as roofing and siding.

Construction. Targeting new construction is not a priority but should not be discouraged if proposals come forward. Kelley can help meet the demand for housing in the southern part of Story County.

MAXWELL

Maxwell is a thriving small community, home of the Collins-Maxwell High School. There are many services in the community. Residential building activity is healthy, and population growth is one of the highest for the smaller communities in Story County.

2010 POPULATION: 920

MEDIAN AGE: 35.8

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/3.0; Renter/1.5

OWNER/RENTER: 85.1/14.9

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.60% annually

Conditions and Permit Activity

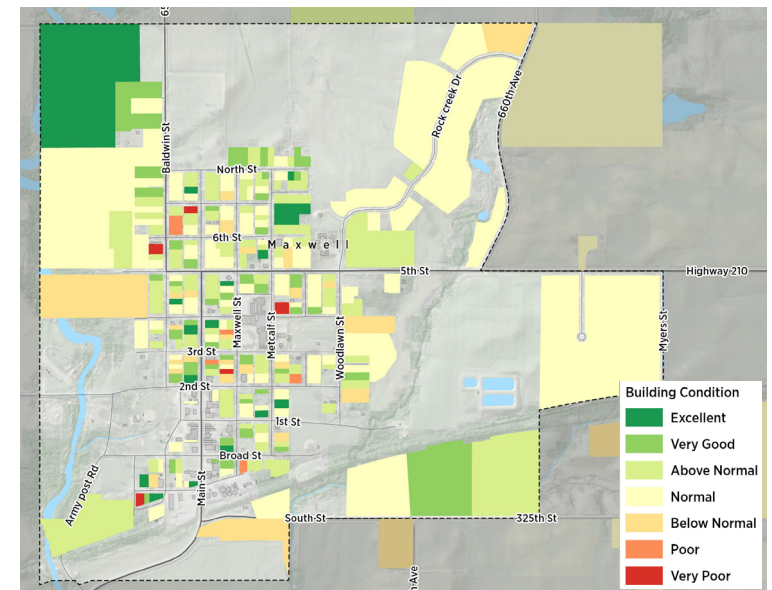
Homes are in average condition with some visible repair and upkeep needs, not uncommon for a small community in Iowa. There is healthy residential construction activity with about 24 units added from 2010-2019. However, these homes are mostly on large lot subdivisions in the northeast and east part of town that may not be a sustainable future growth model.

Opportunities

Targeted Reinvestment. While much of the housing stock is in good condition, areas north of 5th Street require attention ranging from minor to major reinvestment. A targeted rehabilitation program would repair/stabilize participating homes.

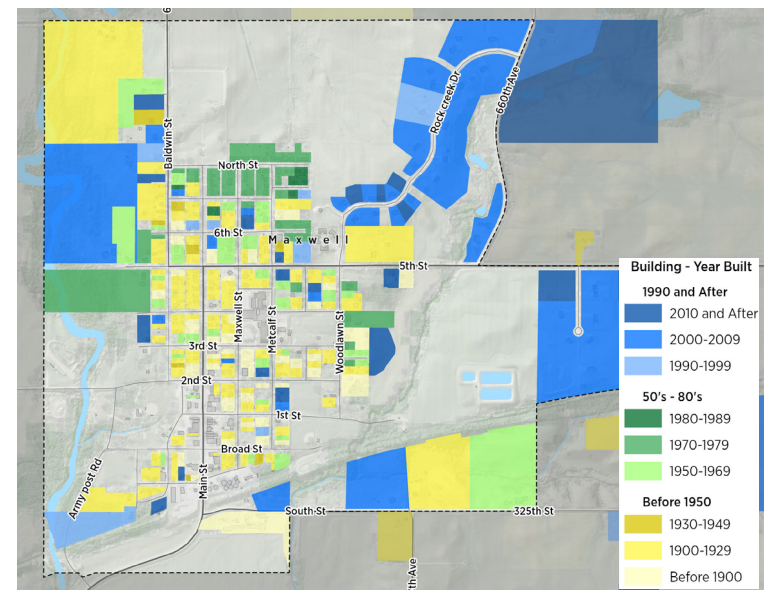
Growth Prospects. A floodway limits growth potential on the west and south of Maxwell. However, new subdivision growth is happening in other areas. With limited land left in city limits, any new subdivision growth needs to happen on smaller lots than what has happened in the past to provide more housing variety and be fiscally responsible for infrastructure costs.

Figure 4.45: Building Condition, Maxwell



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.46: Year Built, Maxwell



Source: Story County Assessor

MCCALLSBURG

McCallsburg is in the northeastern part of Story County and isolated from the larger cities. However, there is still some residential building activity and population growth. With the limited number of services and amenities, growth should remain stable in the future.

2010 POPULATION: 333

MEDIAN AGE: 30.2

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/3.0; Renter/1.88

OWNER/RENTER: 79.5/20.5

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.25% annually

Conditions and Permit Activity

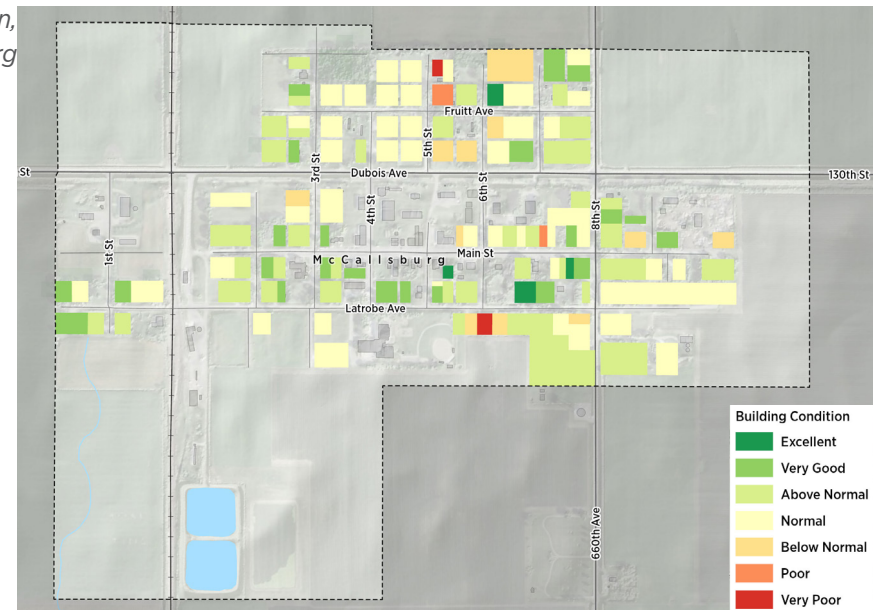
Like many other small communities in Story County, housing in McCallsburg is generally in good condition, with only a few visible spots of dilapidation. The past ten years saw a few new residential units, a trend that should remain consistent in the future to maintain a stable population.

Opportunities

Conservation. The primary goal for McCallsburg is to encourage homeowners to complete repairs and upkeep of the existing housing stock. Encouragement could require county wide incentives like discussed for other communities.

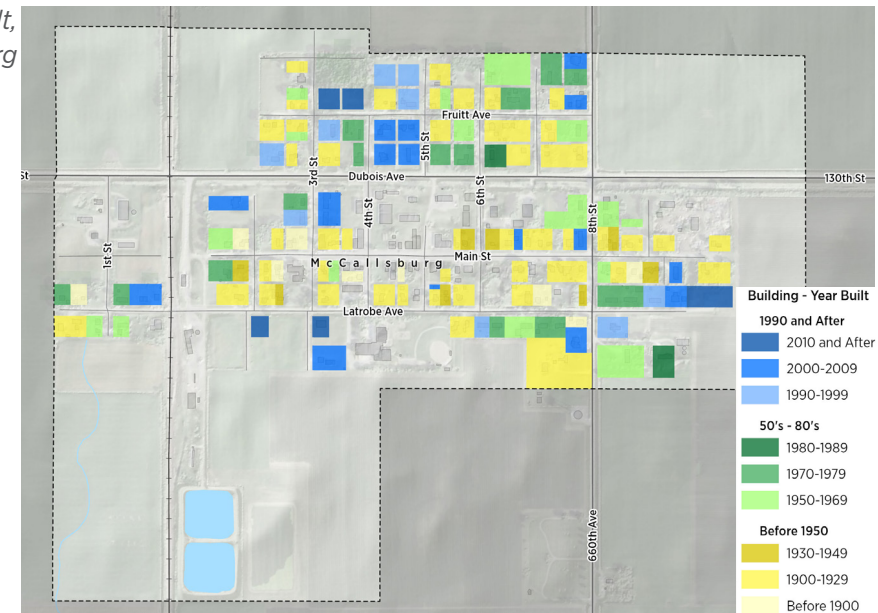
Existing Lots. McCallsburg does have a small inventory of lots owned by the city. These lots are opportunities for the city to sell at low costs if tied to lower priced housing development.

Figure 4.47: Building Condition, McCallsburg



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.48: Year Built, McCallsburg



Source: Story County Assessor

SHELDAHL

Located in far southwestern Story County and partially in Boone County and Polk County, Sheldahl is close to the smallest community in the County with the oldest population. It is one of the few communities with no population growth. However, it is adjacent to Slater, which is growing at a moderate rate, a trend that could spill over to Sheldahl if the land is made available.

2010 POPULATION: 319

MEDIAN AGE: 42.3

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.25; Renter/1.65

OWNER/RENTER: 82.7/17.3

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.10% annually

Opportunities

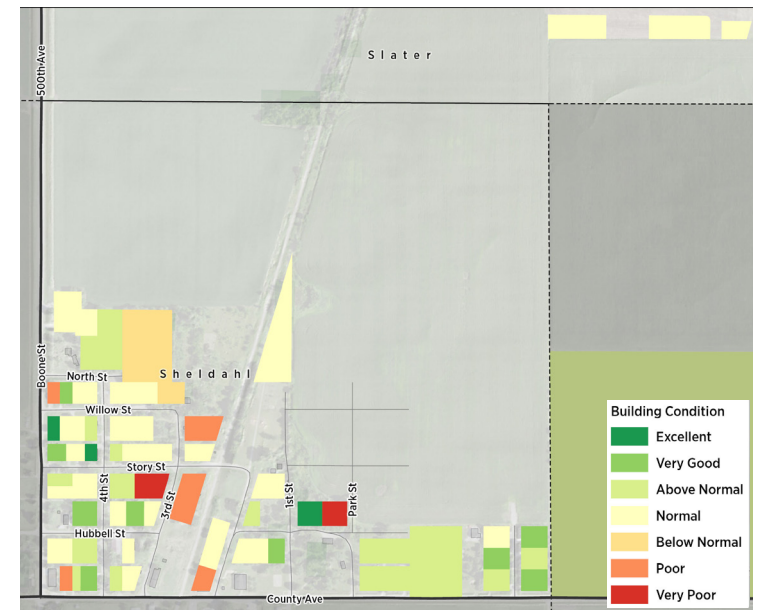
Location. Sheldahl's location offers the potential for growth in the future if development spills over from Slater. The potential will depend on land availability and a builder wanting to do a home or two a year.

Existing Attainable Options. The housing stock needs to be maintained in the community, which may mean rehabilitation programs that target elderly households before they move to something else. Additionally, manufactured homes could be a model for infill lots or splits of large lots.

Conditions and Permit Activity

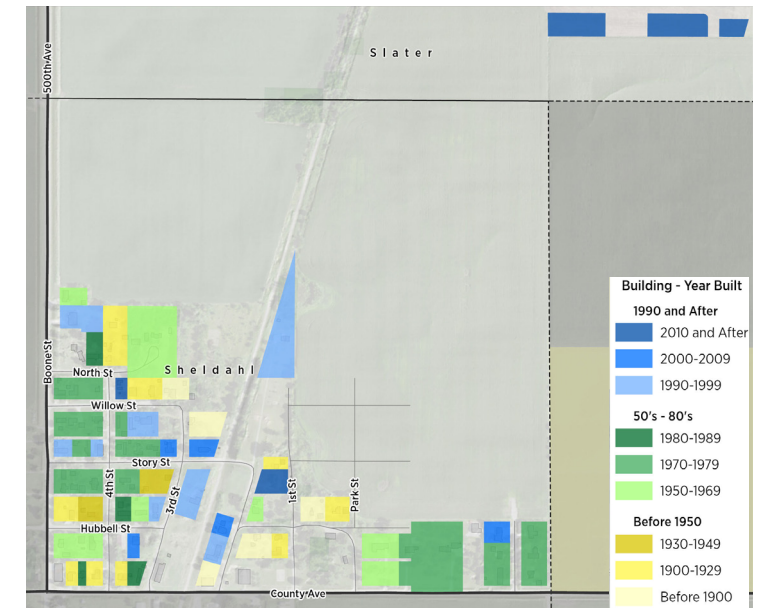
As a smaller community, conditions vary from good to below average. The condition of homes is lower than in Slater but still not at a level of widespread dilapidation. Only a few homes may need significant rehabilitation work. However, there is virtually no residential construction in the community to support new households. Much of the existing housing stock will remain a viable option for households with below-average incomes in Story County, much of which is manufactured housing.

Figure 4.49: Building Condition, Sheldahl



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.50: Year Built, Sheldahl



Source: Story County Assessor

ZEARING

Zearing is a community isolated from other larger cities in the northeast part of Story County. The population is declining with virtually no residential construction from 2010-2019. Conservation of the existing housing stock is the primary goal for the community in the future.

2010 POPULATION: 554

MEDIAN AGE: 41.8

HOUSEHOLD SIZE: Owner/2.56; Renter/1.57

OWNER/RENTER: 72.7/27.3

2020-2040 FORECAST GROWTH RATE: 0.10% annually

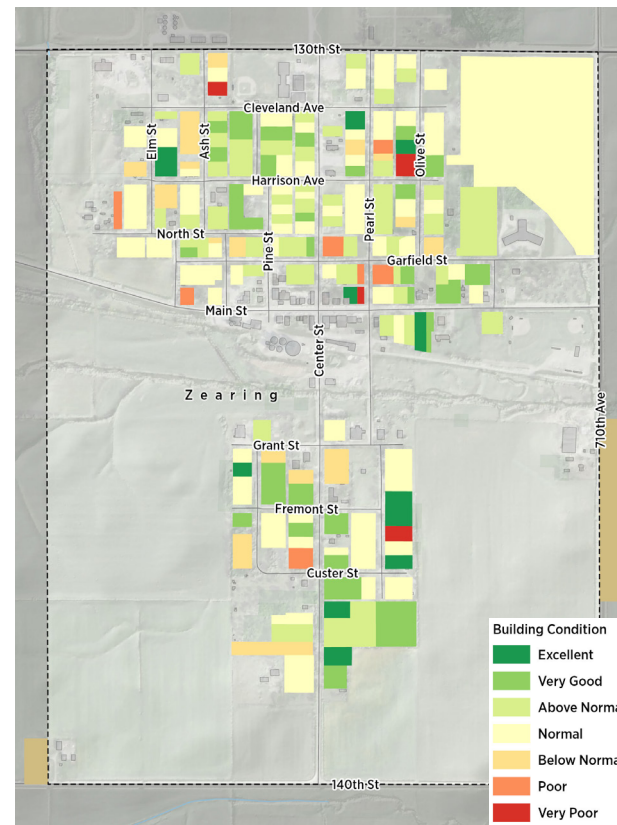
Condition and Permit Activity

Housing in Zearing is generally in good condition, with only a few spots of visible dilapidation. The condition of the commercial downtown needs more attention than residential uses. The past ten years yielded a few new homes.

Opportunities

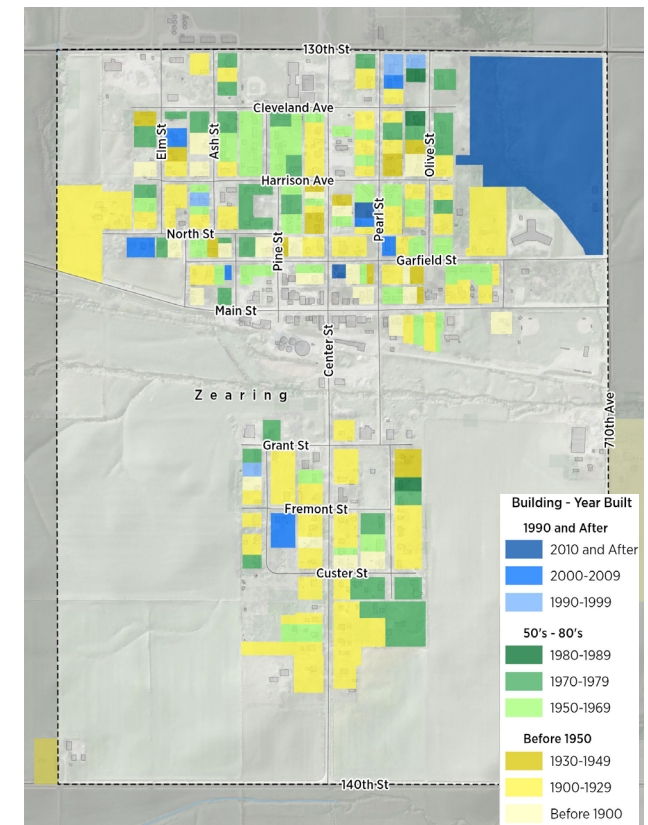
Conservation. Zearing does not have significant rehabilitation, redevelopment, or demolition need. Efforts developed county-wide should prevent existing homes from reaching a state of dilapidation, especially older homes like those in Zearing.

Figure 4.51: Building Condition, Zearing



Source: Story County Assessor

Figure 4.52: Year Built, Zearing



Source: Story County Assessor

Downtown. While much has been done by the City over the past years to revive downtown, continued efforts to revive buildings in the downtown would increase the first impressions of the community. The efforts do not have to target commercial businesses but could be residential uses or community spaces.

Land Availability. There are land opportunities but no interest from landowners to sell or builders to pursue. A targeted program, perhaps combined with other communities, could help spur interest. See Chapter 5 for details.

WHERE ARE THE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES?

Each city in Story County generally knows where the next logical area for new development lies. Chapter 5 will detail strategies for lot development in communities with more land constraints, infrastructure challenges, and barriers to land acquisition. The trigger for high priority new development areas includes:

- Previous or upcoming investment in physical assets or infrastructure that creates private market investment in housing.
- Areas that promote direct and safe access to community assets for pedestrians of all ages, especially to schools.
- Areas adjacent to existing development where public infrastructure can easily extend.
- Areas out of significant topological barriers that would add high costs to site construction, such as steep slopes or flooding.
- Areas where land is already in public possession for development.

Homes in Story County communities are in good condition with little widespread deterioration. Therefore, there is not a broad need for targeted rehabilitation programs. However, each city should evaluate and monitor conditions and quickly act on deteriorated properties. Programs city or county wide can then tailor to specific contexts or conditions.



Very Good Condition



Normal Condition



Fair Condition



Poor Condition

Note that housing programs are most effective when targeted at particular areas. The program categories could include:

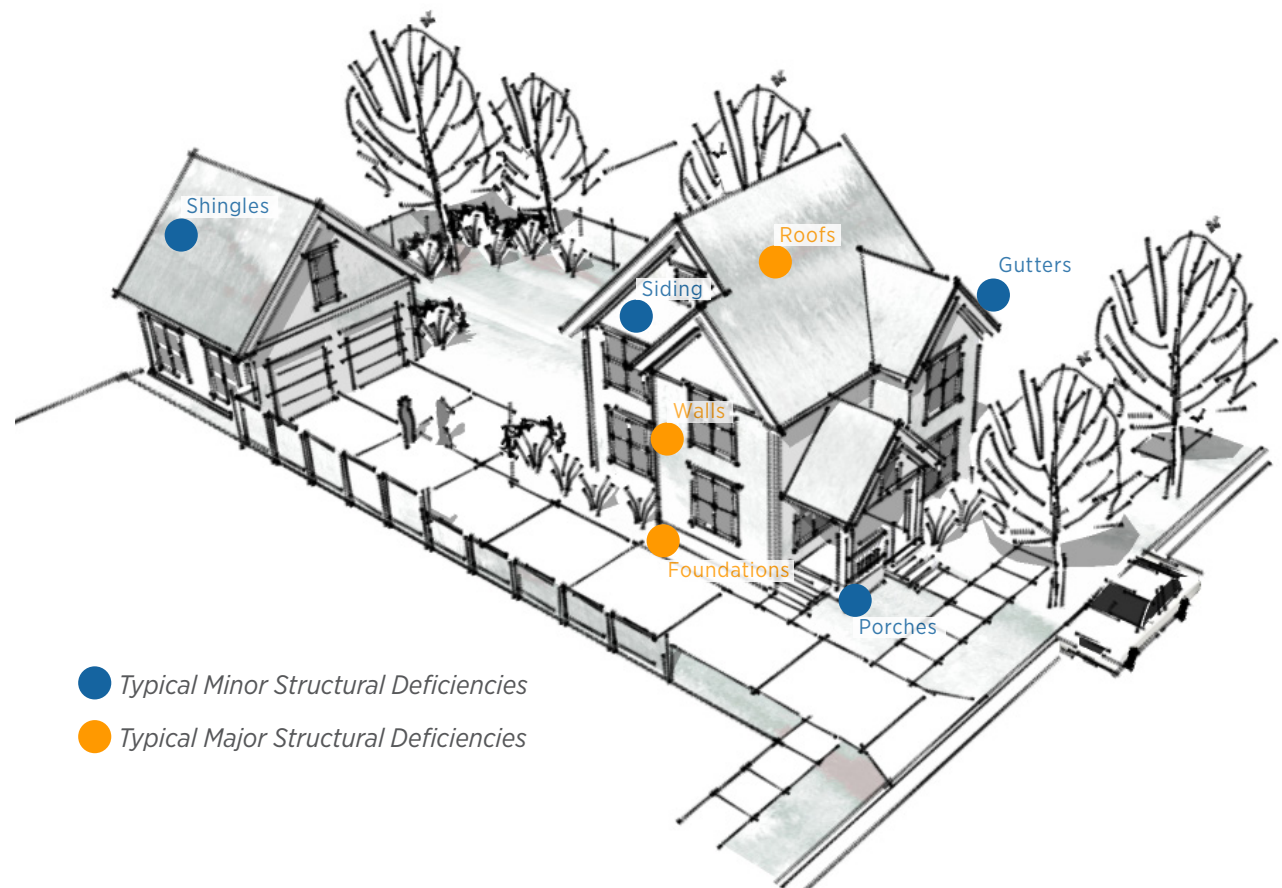
Infill and Stabilization. These areas are a block or more in size with more severe housing deficiencies needing major structural repair, or vacant lots. Sites may be large enough and clustered enough that a targeted program to remove deteriorated structures and develop vacant lots will significantly impact housing.

Neighborhood Conservation. These areas have a cluster of housing in fair condition but below average. Policies for this area should focus on conserving the existing housing stock through a coordinated rehabilitation strategy that may address mostly minor structural deficiencies. These areas often include entry corridors, where people make the first impressions of a community.

Redevelopment Opportunity. These are large sites or blocks that have the most deteriorated structures. Infrastructure improvements and removal of deteriorated structures should create safe, affordable housing and stronger neighborhoods.

Chapter 5 provides tools to implement programs for each context.

Figure 4.53: Typical Minor versus Major Deficiencies



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5 STRATEGIC MARKET APPROACH

STRATEGIC MARKET APPROACHES

The information in the previous chapters indicates a need to address several gaps in the market. These include more options for attainable housing and lot development, among others. Understanding the gaps means little without a plan to address them. The past shows the market itself will not fix these gaps. Therefore, the strategies in this chapter explore how local governments, organizations, builders, and other partnerships can work together to meet housing needs in Story County. Many of the strategies will require champions to lead them into action. This study charges the technical committee that led the study process to help champion actions in their communities.

Strategy categories

It is important to note that there is no silver bullet to all aspects of the housing market. For example, Ames and Iowa State University will always have an influence on the housing market throughout Story County that are out of individual cities control. Further, there are aspects of the housing market, such as high-end housing types, that do not require policy interventions. **Figure 5.1** shows the strategies appropriate for Story County and the situations to use them for the most significant effect. **Figure 5.2** at the end of the chapter assigns more specific strategies to income levels and price points, which are explained in further detail in this chapter.

GOALS

The following goals were developed from the data analysis and community input to address housing needs in Story County. These goals are the basis for adopting and implementing housing strategies for cities and the county, individually or collaboratively.

OVERARCHING - 1. Share risks with the private market when appropriate

- Target for all housing products except large lot single-family development with over 12,000 s.f. lots. Tools:
 - › Public/Private Partnerships
 - › Non-profit
 - › Infrastructure cost-sharing
 - › Land assembly

2. Create a supply of affordable lots

- Focus on direct lot development over indirect tax increment financing (TIF) and abatement strategies. Alternatively, some communities have chosen not to eliminate strategies like TIF or Tax Abatement but have established specific guidelines for the use of these incentives. Traditionally, these are targeted at the production of affordable or below market rate housing.
- Do not forget about infill lot opportunities where infrastructure is already in place.
- Share risks with the private market when appropriate.
- Risk-sharing can be in the up-front costs of development or guarantees after development or sale is complete.

- An indirect way to share risk is through creating more qualified buyers. Obtaining financing is not guaranteed for lower-income groups; work on risk-sharing with lenders.

3. Grow the number of rental units for all age groups

- Rental does not only have to be apartment buildings. Small footprint homes and townhomes can be quality rentals to.
- Allow accessory dwelling units in most areas.
- Certain contexts may need to require a portion of workforce housing to receive incentives.

4. Foster grassroots efforts

- Local stakeholders can play a role in housing development, even taking the lead already—opportunities to bring more into the process.
- Proactive proposals to bring people to the table (RFP, prepared sites, etc.).
- Bring employers to the table as a financial and advocate resource. Efforts like transportation and child care are directly related to housing as well.
- Transition more public funds from traditional economic development programs to new housing programs. Housing is economic development.

Figure 5.1: Goals and Outcomes

GOAL	POLICY TARGETED HOUSING PRODUCT	TARGET PRICE POINT	CITY OR CONTEXT LOCATION
OVERARCHING GOAL 1: Share risks with the private market when appropriate	All products except single-family development lots over 12,000 s.f.	All price points acceptable; More policy incentives for homes under \$250,000 and rents under \$1,000 Deferred loans and developer paybacks more appropriate for higher price points	All cities and all locations outside of environmentally sensitive areas Incentive policies reserved for areas contiguous to existing development and/or a mix of housing types (small lot, attached, single-family, etc.)
GOAL 2: Create a supply of affordable lots	New single-family, duplex, and townhomes on lots under 12,000 s.f.	Lot price points under \$40k to bring down the overall housing cost	All cities and locations adjacent to existing infrastructure. Includes infill lots
GOAL 3: Grow the number of rental units for all age groups	Townhomes, multi-plexes, apartments, co-housing, ADUs	All price points, focus on moderate to market rate rents	All cities with more needed in the larger cities
GOAL 4: Foster grassroots efforts	All products, especially single-family or attached housing	Varies, moderate market rate preferred for increased risk from less experience	Adjacent to existing infrastructure and infill sites
GOAL 5: Proactively preserve the existing housing stock	All products, especially single-family homes	Focus on homes priced under \$200,000	All cities based on recommendations in Chapter 3
GOAL 6: Maintain Fair Zoning and Regulations	Attached and Multi-family	Various	N/A

5. Proactively preserve the existing housing stock

- Stable conditions today are not guaranteed in the future. Monitor and encourage investment regularly.
- Market existing repair programs, neighborhood clean-ups, and local trades resources for home maintenance needs.

6. Maintain fair zoning and regulations

- Ensure that housing products other than single-family dwellings are allowed in more than one zoning district.
- Coordinate the building code with lender requirements for financing of multi-unit structures.
- Consider lot size maximums for individual districts to maintain public costs and revenues gained per acre.

Program Focuses

The program for Story County is an incremental strategy based on a toolbox of programs and policy interventions for different housing products needs to meet demand. **Figure 5.3** at the end of the chapter summarizes the array of programs to meet the housing goals.

Overarching Goal 1: Share Risks With the Private Market When Appropriate Objectives

1. Increase variety in the market.
2. Prove that new construction and market rate rents can be supported.

Under this goal, the tools and strategies are meant to target housing needs being under-produced in the market today. There is building activity occurring in Story County, especially in unincorporated areas. The private market should be allowed to continue producing these types of housing units, according to the land use policies of local comprehensive plans and the county C2C Plan. However, these private market developments happening already today (often on large lots) are not the place to target public risk sharing tools and strategies.

Tools: Public/Private Partnerships

Story County Housing Trust Fund. The Story County Housing Trust fund established in 2017 targets affordable housing in the County. Generally, funds from the Trust are for repair work to existing buildings, emergency rent or utilities, and application fees. The relative

recent establishment of the fund means that implementation may still be tweaked. Regular review of bylaws and directive should ensure current needs are being met. Additionally, many other trust funds use monies for:

- Construction of new entry level.
- Development of new rental housing.
- Support for gap financing or even direct incentives to developers for the development of target market projects.

Lending Consortium. A cooperative private sector venture among lending institutions active in the Story County housing market to spread their individual risks. The consortium would support the Trust Fund or other developed partnership's work and distributes reasonable risk in such a way that no one institution is over-exposed. For Story County this may just be a matter of growing the existing relationships that have been established through grassroots efforts. The objective and directive is to:

1. Provide short term financing or "patient financing" for builders and contractors in the community, especially for non-traditional projects that the federal market avoids.
2. Provide interim financing for projects developed by other housing partnerships and cities.

Omaha 100 Incorporated Omaha, Nebraska (Lending Consortium)

Omaha 100 was incorporated to provide homeownership opportunities enabling low and moderate income borrowers to own their own home. The group provides affordable mortgage loans, grant underwriting, and down payment assistance services.

Omaha 100, Inc. works with a consortium of lenders to provide lower interest rates on home loan products, down payment assistance, and city second mortgages to make homeownership affordable. Clients must complete a home-buyer education course.

More information can be found at:
www.omaha100.org

Major employers (private and public). There is a shortage of workforce across Iowa, especially for the manufacturing sector. Story County is no different. Jobs are available and companies are ready to expand. One way to help attract the workforce is attractive communities and attainable housing options. Employers can and should play an active role in housing partnerships. Some examples include:

- Rent subsidies and down payment assistance for employees residing within Story County. Certain employers operate a housing plan, much like a 401(K) plan, in which the employer provides a matching contribution to be used for a down payment on a home within the community or a specific part of the community.
- Marketing local housing opportunities, including rental and ownership options, rehabilitation or first-time home-buyer programs.
- Day care assistance or provision.
- Direct investment in housing development where their employees can get a discount on housing in the development.

Realtors, builders, and developers. The role for realtors, builders, and developers will be as the contractors, marketers, and, when appropriate, as financial partners.

- Realtors in particular play an important role in a housing partnership that involves informing builders, cities, the Chamber, and Economic Development Organizations on the preferences of buyers. Realtor's secondary role involves marketing new housing, or rehabilitated homes, to potential residents and working with employers to match new recruits with housing that fits employees' needs.
- Builders and developers have the important role of building new housing products not being produced in the market today. Of course, they cannot be expected to take on all the risk of such projects and should be ensured that profit can be made. However, they must be willing to come to the table and build high-quality, design oriented products that meet city's goals.

Housing Incentives at Saint Louis University

Saint Louis University has provided a housing benefit to its employees through an Employer Assisted Housing Program with three benefits for employees:

- Housing information and education on home ownership
- When available, preferred rates and reduced closing costs on mortgage and refinancing costs through partnering institutions.
- When available, forgivable loans for eligible employees, applicable towards the purchase of a home located in the designated neighborhoods.

It applies to all current, full-time faculty and staff members. Properties eligible for the forgivable loan must be located with specific areas. In the SLU program the percentage of the loan that is forgiven increases with the number of years of employment after origination of the loan, up to 100% of the loan after five years of employment.



Tools: Non-Profit

Development of a Non-Profit Developer. For housing products at price points well below market rate, an entity can help produce or preserve housing in ways that private market can't be successful. There are different names that such an organization could form under. Story County has such an organization, the Story County Community Housing Corporation. The organization operates under several features and priorities:

- It operates as a private developer and needs the same permanent expertise and adequate capitalization as a private enterprise.
- SCCHC could also focus on existing housing. Specifically, buying low quality houses, completing major rehabilitation, and selling them to new owners.
- Financing often relies on private donations, but a lending consortium could also be leveraged. Funds should focus on generating working capital for the organization from many lenders.
 - › This permits construction of enough units to both achieve some economy of scale and, in owner-occupied projects, provide security to prospective owners. Previously, the SCCHC has focused on 4-12 unit apartment buildings in Ames.

Expanding the reach and financing methods can be leveraged more to reach areas outside of Ames. Many of the tools in this chapter can complement the work and leverage the expertise of the SCCHC as a managing organization.

- SCCHC should become a certified Community Housing Development Organization to access more funding and abilities. This is largely on the organization to pursue, but the County could help through administrative assistance and paperwork procedures.

Tools: Land Assembly

Work with development-oriented local landowners to solidify a legacy project. New lot development is often dependent on farmland sales on the periphery of cities. Many current land owners do not wish to sell for development and should not be forced to. However, many of these same landowners may have been born and raised in the community and have great pride. Regular communication and relationships with these owners could generate interest in development that meets their desires and a way to improve the community. These relationships can be maintained by county, city staff, or elected officials, depending on previous interactions.

Reuse of surplus public lands or sites. Some cities have a surplus of public land that has been either retained as public open space or excess from other public project. Reducing the amount of public park land should not typically be considered. However, underused spaces in very large parks can be candidates for small housing projects. These projects would typically be reserved for medium density housing ranging from 6-12 units total in a townhome or small lot format.

29% of Iowa land owned primarily for family/sentimental reasons

60% of farmland in Iowa is owned by owners 65+ years old

33% of land owned by owners 75+ years old

- ISU Extension, Center for Agriculture and Rural Development

Assembly of infill opportunities. Infill development has several benefits for communities.

- First, placing housing on vacant lots sustains the character of established neighborhoods rather than giving a perception of disinvestment.
- Second, roads and infrastructure are already in place that many times can reduce the upfront cost of development.

On the other hand, infill development generally does not cater to large-scale projects, but rather new construction on a lot-by-lot basis. Contractors are often not interested in working with multiple landowners, and the cost of site preparation (removing dilapidated structures or addressing aging infrastructure) increases costs for the developer. For these reasons, communities will play a key role in the development of infill lots by assembling lots for economies of scale.



Old school building in Cambridge, now apartments. These have popular appeal across Iowa for conversion to rental housing units.

Assembly by communities or the non-profit development organization should:

1. Be located in areas that are substantially sound and attractive, albeit older, neighborhoods that will sustain and benefit from the higher cost of new construction.
2. Try to be clustered together as much as possible, giving security for buyers and increasing values in the surrounding neighborhood.
3. Have a program in place to acquire vacant lots or dilapidated houses where rehabilitation is not feasible.
4. Prepare a redevelopment plan for clustered sites to guide developers and builders. See the prepackage site plans and RFPs strategy later in this chapter.
5. Where a concentration of contiguous infill sites cannot be found, the resources of multiple partners and programs can be applied to make a scattered site redevelopment appealing to a developer looking to use their resources to build more than one unit at a time or local investors interested in smaller scale investments one at a time.

Mobile Home Buyout Program: Faribault, Minnesota

The Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in Faribault has used its Mobile Home Buyout Program to acquire and remove substandard housing from its existing mobile parks.

Through this voluntary program, owners of uninhabited, dilapidated or substandard mobile homes may apply to participate in the buyout program. If the unit is determined to be substandard, uninhabited, or dilapidated, the HRA will buy the mobile for a flat rate of \$2,000, not including property tax or lot rent. Upon acquisition, the home is then properly demolished, removed, and the lot repurposed.

<https://www.ci.faribault.mn.us/427/Mobile-Home-Buyout-Program>

Goal 2: Create a Supply of Affordable Lots.

Objectives

1. Reduce the purchase price of homes by reducing the cost of lots.
2. Lower the risk for the development of new affordable lots.

Tools: Special assessments

In many communities, special assessments are used to finance infrastructure. While assessments reduce the initial purchase price of the house, they are repaid through monthly payments, and therefore add to the monthly and overall cost of the house. Thus, special assessments are not valid tools to target for the lowest income households, but rather those that have adequate monthly funds. These households may have trouble saving for a downpayment because of student loans, high current rent costs, or first-time homebuyers new to the market.

Tools: Subordinate payments

A city front-ends a portion of public improvements, repaid over a longer period through a second mortgage on the property. This reduces payments over special assessments by extending the loan term and reducing the principal.

Tools: Deferred payment

Deferred loans or soft-seconds. The city finances the infrastructure as a deferred loan. The infrastructure loan is paid back upon sale of the house. The repayment represents the same percentage of the sale proceeds that the initial infrastructure loan made up of the original price.

Tools: Land assembly (discussed previously)

Direct lot development. The policies and strategies for lot development is directly impacted by a community's absorption rate. Some communities like Huxley have been stable; therefore, less intervention is traditionally needed. However, affordability is still a concern of many buyers and builders.

Don't be afraid of the long-term investment, budget annually. Sometimes there will be an opportunity to acquire property through estate gifts, tax delinquency, or property liens. While these surplus land assets must be maintained, these resources can be used as an incentive to encourage new housing development.

These opportunities should not be taken as ways to make profit. Rather, every opportunity should be made to offer the lots for minimal costs. Leaders must realize infill housing is a long-term investment that costs the public significantly less than in greenfield development. The city reaps the benefit of using its existing infrastructure while also directing investment to help stabilize existing neighborhoods. For smaller communities, this incentive may be absolutely necessary.

Opportunity Housing Ordinance Bloomington, MN

In February 2019 the City of Bloomington passed the Opportunity Housing Ordinance requiring all new housing and substantial housing rehabilitation projects to offer some affordable rates of 60% AMI or less. The ordinance included developers, affordable housing experts, and other stakeholders in the process.

To offset costs developers can use incentives and financing options like housing tax increment financing, land write-down, and project based housing vouchers. Incentives:

- Density Bonuses/Floor Area Ratio Bonuses
- Parking Reductions
- Minimum Unit Size Reduction
- Landscape Fee In-Lieu Reduction
- Development Fee Reimbursement
- Expedited Plan Review

The amount of incentives available to the project is directly correlated to the number of affordable units or the amount of affordability. Developers have the option of contributing land or money to the affordable-housing trust fund at a rate of \$9.60 per square foot of market-rate housing built.

Direct application of this type of program may not have the same results. However, development of an affordable housing fund that is supported by developments designed for households making over 120% AMI could create a pool of funding for affordable housing. www.bloomingtonmn.gov/oh/opportunity-housing-creation-and-preservation

Goal 3: Grow the Number of Rental Units For All Age Groups

Objectives

1. Increase the supply of quality rental options.
2. Provide rental options beyond traditional apartments, including duplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units.

Tools: Leverage risk sharing tools with product requirements.

Create and act on new policies around incentives and financing mechanisms to target missing product types. Many, if not all, of the tools in this chapter should apply to product types other than single-family development on 10,000 square foot lots. Figure 5.2 identifies how to apply tools for the greatest benefit to Story County housing demand.

Tools: Downtown/commercial building reuse

Housing does not have to come from infill or new development. Many cities already know that commercial uses are changing, with new opportunities for building reuse. Much like the conversion of old school buildings, obsolete commercial building reuse can provide relatively easy opportunities for rentals and provide support for the commercial building owner.

A development group like the Story County Economic Development Group may need to help property owners:

- Navigate the rehab process.
- Manage properties by handling leasing and maintenance issues.

Residential uses on the ground floor of downtown commercial areas are also reasonable for district rebirth. Zoning requirements for only commercial uses on ground floors are typically only appropriate for dense and high demand commercial districts. A compromise is permitting ground floor residential in the rear of the building with alley access. This can also create more appropriately-sized leasable spaces for today's commercial businesses.

Affordable Housing Fund - Grand Rapids, MI

The city of Grand Rapids set an aggressive policy target for a citywide inventory of 30% affordable housing units. One tool created to help with the effort is an Affordable Housing Fund leveraged by dedicated city revenues, private contributions, and interest earnings. Additionally, a board provides recommendations for policy changes and managing allocations. Funds come from:

- City appropriations from tax growth
- Private contributions, State funds, County, other grants
- Excess revenues from General Operating Fund

Eligible applicants include non-profits and for-profit affordable housing developers, and public housing authorities. Individuals are eligible for homeownership financial assistance. Fund allocation is used only for situations that meet city needs like mixed-use development, projects with other funding sources, and small scale development.

<https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Housing-NOW>

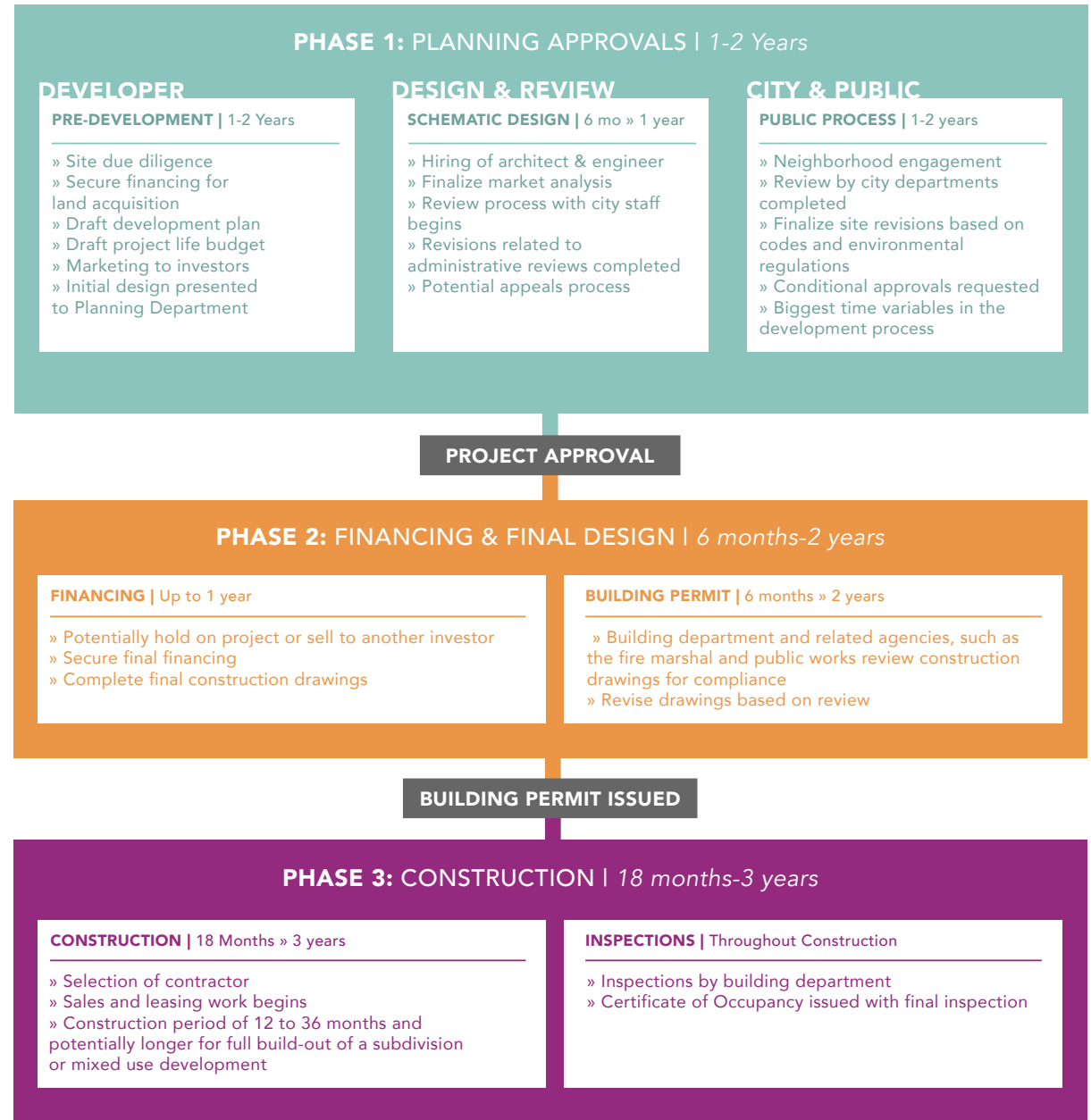


Tools: Pre-packaged site plans and RFPs

Show developers what will get approved, reduce soft costs. There are few developers building anything beyond single-family homes on large lots. That is understandable because the consistency in profits and approval reduces risk. By creating a package of example site plans and products that will get approved, a level of risk is taken off the builder. Cities or economic development organizations could go as far to release Requests for Proposals (RFP) to develop assembled sites under certain criteria and standards. Both of these methods are straightforward ways to eliminate approval risks.

Small Lot, Townhome, Middle-density Product Demonstration. For the profit side of the housing products, this housing study shows the demand needed for housing absorption. However, it may still be necessary to provide demonstration projects. This includes a non-profit leading or the lending consortium providing financial assistance. Types of assistance include: gap financing, infrastructure assistance, financial or tax assistance, and/or expedited permitting.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



Goal 4: Foster Grassroot Efforts

Objectives

1. Don't rely entirely on outside developers who need to build at large scales for profit margins.
2. Find ways to partner local builders with local investors who have the means and passion for their communities to undertake land development.

Tools: Housing advocates

Develop a network of housing advocates in all communities that will attend public meetings and be a voice for housing diversity. Story County has many organizations that do this already, a primary reason for the commission of this study.

Tools: Recruitment, skilled trades “residency”

There is a nationwide deficit in skilled trades people. The longterm solution is to develop innovative workforce development approaches to train new workers. Shorter-term approaches include providing incentives for recruiting young workers and apprentices. Incentives could include paying for tools, student loan payments, or even subsidized housing payments. Funds could come from economic development programs, philanthropy, or non-profit organizations.

Tools: Pre-packaged site plans and RFPs

Show what will get approved and trigger interest by potential investors. Discussed previously, this also applies as technical assistance for less experienced local investors or community members interested in a community project, much like previously done in Nevada by a partnership of many community members.

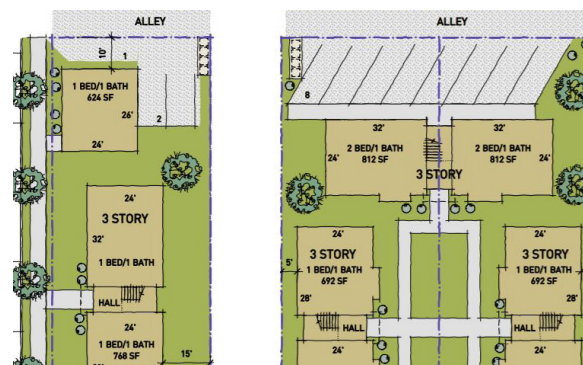
Missing Middle for Chattanooga, TN

With help from the Incremental Development Alliance, Chattanooga leaders and stakeholder undertook an intensive developer workshop to identify solutions for missing middle housing types. The process resulted in a development packet that lays the framework for a developer to pursue these projects including:

- Picking a building type based on the developer's financing options and site circumstances.
- Guides and site plans for good urban design amid traditional single-family neighborhoods.
- Technical considerations for packaging development applications.
- Bank packages for different building types to show how to bring the project to life by proving profits for lenders.

<https://www.incrementaldevelopment.org/>

<https://www.cneinc.org/creating-homes>



Community-Based Action

Risk sharing is noted as a vehicle for addressing housing challenges. However, communities cannot simply wait around for development opportunities. Small communities understand this best. Residents and stakeholders within several communities in Iowa, including Nevada, recognize the need to take action by pooling their own resources and expertise to act as the developer. Two examples include:

- **Fairfield, Iowa.** A group of local stakeholders combined equity stakes to act together as the developer and builder of 27+ townhomes and duplexes in Fairfield. Risk sharing included private equity, City TIF funds, tax abatement, and Iowa Workforce Housing Tax Credits.
- **Humboldt, Iowa.** Similar to development in Fairfield, local stakeholders pooled equity to finance 32 single-family and duplex units. The City helped share risk through TIF financing and tax abatement.

These are a couple examples of local action to share risk and start a grassroots, proactive effort for housing development. For Story County, examples like this are about encouraging local interest and making the process easy for less experienced investors to pursue.

These projects were assisted in part by 571 Polson Developments, LLC. For more information on similar projects in Iowa go to: <https://571polson.com/>

Goal 5: Proactively Preserve the Existing Housing Stock

Objectives

1. Continue to maintain the most affordable form of housing in Story County.
2. Make people aware of programs for housing conservation.
3. Promote community pride.

Tools: Code enforcement

Share resources among cities. One of the most challenging aspects of code enforcement can be staffing. Many communities do not have the capacity to keep a trained code enforcement officer on staff full time. Sharing this resource with surrounding communities or with the County can lessen the cost to individual communities. Common ordinances could be passed across communities, making it easier for one officer to implement, but also to create a level playing field across the County.

A first step is to identify the level of enforcement happening in each city. This could be led by the County or economic development group to connect city staff. After identifying gaps, solutions for sharing resources or developing new resources can be established.

Note, the County does not have a building code in unincorporated areas. Adopting a building code could help maintain the quality and condition of homes outside of cities.

Tools: Invest in neighborhood pride

Quality of life amenities. Strategies to create and maintain housing opportunities mean little if people do not want to live and age in a community. They become less invested in their home. Amenities like quality schools, parks, libraries, and grocery stores are highly valued and attractive to retain long-term residents. Continual improvements are essential, such as the expansion of fiber Internet to the whole County.

Basic public services. If cities ask residents to elevate the level of property maintenance then city property must be held to the same level. Maintaining existing streets and sidewalks creates a positive image of the community and shows the city cares. Often public investment can encourage private property owner investment.

Similarly, investing in infrastructure, city property (library, city hall, vacant lots, etc.) should be kept to a level comparable to the level you want residents to maintain their personal property.



Tools: Market existing programs

Regular communication notices. This may go without saying, but assistance programs do little if residents do not know about them. This was the case during some of the listening sessions completed during this study. Proactive annual marketing can occur through utility bills, newsletter, e-mail lists, and other mediums, especially in the spring as construction season begins. Ideally, the County or economic development group would coordinate with cities on efforts county wide. For local city programs, city staff should lead efficient ways to market programs to residents.

New rehab programs for both rental (landlords) and owner. With little code enforcement in most communities and a tight rental market, there is often no incentive for rental property owners to make improvements. Rental rehabilitation programs should focus on workforce housing, providing leveraged loans combined with code enforcement.

With limited new multi-family construction in many communities over the past 10 years, the rental market often depends on conversion of single-family homes where investors are able to get high rents because of the shortage. These homes tend to be some of the oldest housing and may be lower quality. Rehab programs provide financing for the improvement of sound rental properties in need of rehabilitation.

- Rental rehabilitation must include both incentives and consequences to create a balanced "carrot and stick" based program. This is why effective housing code enforcement is the key to ensure that units meet minimum housing standards.
- Rental inspection and registration programs can be effective, but are staff-intensive and must be administered in a way that avoids displacing low-income households. Partnerships to share staff and defray costs like under the Tool of Code Enforcement.

Energy efficiency and emergency programs. Story County already has programs to reduce monthly utility costs for lower income households in older homes. These funding streams can be used to replace windows, heating and cooling systems, or any other upgrades that improve the energy efficiency of the home. Marketing the programs are essential for realizing the benefits. Ideas for expanding the program could include offering to first-time home buyers and the elderly.

Create a database of all available programs. There are many programs targeted to Ames residents. However, it is difficult to find all the housing programs available to residents outside of Ames. There were many discussed in the listening sessions with community stakeholders, but it is difficult to find these programs online. One central location that lists programs available across many organization should be managed by the County.

Housing Next - Ottawa County, MI

Housing Next was formed as a 5-year pilot initiative to work closely with local units of government, developers and non-profits to remove barriers to the creation of more housing supply at all price points.

It is an independent organization, not a non-profit, acting as a middle person to navigate resources and connect developers with projects. It is nested within the structure of the Greater Ottawa County United Way and funded by the community foundations of Holland/Zeland, Grand Haven and private donors in Ottawa County. Some of its initiatives include:

- Evaluate local zoning standards to find ways to reduce regulatory barriers.
- Works with developers to find available land, assemble preliminary development plans that align with a community master plan and seek out funding opportunities.
- Works with other non-profits and housing advocates to seek out long term funding mechanisms and organizational structures.

<https://www.housingnext.org/>



Goal 6: Maintain Fair Zoning and Regulations

Objectives

1. Approve projects objectively and logically.
2. Update regulations for current policies/needs.

Tools: Update land use plans across cities

Develop with an inclusive community process so people know what to expect. Zoning and the intentions of land use growth should not be a surprise to residents when a development project comes forward. An inclusive and regular review and update of the land use plan (every 3-5 years) communicates growth intentions and land use policies. Therefore, the location and desire for different types of housing products is vetted earlier rather than at a hearing for rezoning. Story County recently updated their land use plan.

Additionally, for cities with no existing zoning ordinance, a database of existing ordinances from other cities in Story County could be developed. Using these resources, cities should establish codes that are most appropriate for their community. Development of similar ordinances across the County can create an easier building environment for developers.

Tools: Broaden residential permitted uses by-right under certain contexts and design standards

Focus on relationships to Downtowns, major streets, schools, and parks. A supplemental review of regulations was provided to communities with this housing study. Many communities are now recognizing that single-family, small lot development, multi-plexes, and even apartments

can fit well in most areas of a city, are lower costs, and align with younger households preferences. Higher density in traditional residential zoning districts may be prioritized near high use areas and public spaces. Nonetheless, the out-dated mid-century single-family zoning districts are a hindrance to housing affordability and variety.

Administrative site plan approval when housing meets city's comprehensive plan goals and targeted housing needs. Similar to an inclusive community process, if the comprehensive plan is regularly updated by the community then there should be little need to push projects through an extended development review process. Site plans that meet the intent of the comprehensive plan should not require public hearing by city councils. Of course, some site plans should still require council and Board of Supervisor approvals such as those with:

- A rezoning application.
- Potential significant traffic or parking areas.
- Deviations from the comprehensive plan.

Tools: Evaluate lot size/setback reductions

Focus on design, not density. Sometimes the market wants to produce smaller lot size developments. Reducing minimum lot size requirements does not mean all developments will occur at the minimum. However, it gives developers an option to create more diverse neighborhoods. Generally, 6,000 square-foot lots are more than enough to accommodate single-family homes with adequate spacing, yards, and neighborhood character. Ideally, parking and garages are on a rear alley.

Public Costs by Lot Size

The cost to service development is generally paid back over time through increases in property tax from those homes. However, very low density development puts strain on city infrastructure costs with fewer revenues, even if homes are valued higher. Below are two examples of single-family development and the number of homes adding to the tax base.



Figure 5.1: Strategy Tool Summary by Target Price Point

HOUSING INCOMES	10 YEAR DEMAND	ATTAINABLE RENT	ATTAINABLE HOME OWNERSHIP	TARGET HOUSING TYPES	APPLICABLE STRATEGIES/GOALS	POSSIBLE FINANCING TOOLS
<\$25,000	118	<\$500-700	Most households in rental units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Rentals › Public Housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Public/Private Partnerships (GOAL 1) › Downtown/commercial building reuse (GOAL 3) › Code enforcement (GOAL 4) › Market existing programs (GOAL 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Section 8 certificates and vouchers › Low Income Housing Tax Credit rental development › Senior only housing
\$25,000-\$50,000	472	Around \$700-\$1,200	Purchase price under \$125,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Market rate rentals › Entry-level Homeownership (existing housing) › Market rate senior housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Public/Private Partnerships (GOAL 1) › Non-profit (GOAL 1) › Leverage risk sharing tools, product needs (GOAL 3) › Downtown/commercial building reuse (GOAL 3) › Code enforcement (GOAL 4) › Market existing programs (GOAL 4) › Broaden residential permitted uses (GOAL 6) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Rehabilitation and revitalization programs › State and Federal grants, credit programs
\$50,000-\$75,000	381	>\$1,000	\$125,000-\$200,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Market rate rentals › Entry-level Homeownership (existing housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Public/Private Partnerships (GOAL 1) › Non-profit (GOAL 1) › Infrastructure cost-sharing (GOAL 1) › Land assembly (GOAL 1) › Leverage risk sharing tools, product needs (GOAL 3) › Downtown/commercial building reuse (GOAL 3) › Pre-packaged site plans/ RFPs (GOAL 3) › Code enforcement (GOAL 4) › Market existing programs (GOAL 4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Rehabilitation and revitalization programs › Special assessment or subordinate/deferred payments for new development (GOAL 2) › Tax Increment Financing › State and Federal grants, credit programs for ownership
\$75,000-\$100,000	463	>\$1,500; Mostly home- ownership	\$200,000-\$250,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Market rate rentals › Some market rate housing; Gap financed development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Public/Private Partnerships (GOAL 1) › Infrastructure cost-sharing (GOAL 1) › Land assembly (GOAL 1) › Leverage risk sharing tools, product needs (GOAL 3) › Pre-packaged site plans/RFPs (GOAL 3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Infrastructure financing › Tax Increment Financing › Special assessment or subordinate/deferred payments for new development (GOAL 2)
>\$100,000			>\$250,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Market rate development › Gap financing generally not provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Land assembly (GOAL 1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Generally not needed or advisable use of public funds

IMPLEMENTATION

Figure 5.3 on the next page is a summary of the strategies in this chapter. Each recommendation is characterized according to needed partners and timing such as short (1-3 year), medium (3-5 years), and long term (5+ years). Some will also need to be on-going efforts.

It is often challenging for a study to identify every potential program or strategy and the strategies and policies in this study should be viewed as a starting point that can be built upon and evolved to create a healthy housing market for all.

Figure 5.2: Goals and Outcomes Reference Table

GOAL	POLICY TARGETED HOUSING PRODUCT	TARGET PRICE POINT	CITY OR CONTEXT LOCATION
OVERARCHING GOAL 1: Share risks with the private market when appropriate	All products except single-family development lots over 12,000 s.f.	All price points acceptable; More policy incentives for homes under \$250,000 and rents under \$1,000. Deferred loans and developer paybacks more appropriate for higher price points	All cities and all locations outside of environmentally sensitive areas Incentive policies reserved for areas contiguous to existing development and/or a mix of housing types (small lot, attached, single-family, etc.)
GOAL 2: Create a supply of affordable lots	New single-family, duplex, and townhomes on lots under 12,000 s.f.	Lot price points under \$40k to bring down the overall housing cost	All cities and locations adjacent to existing infrastructure. Includes infill lots
GOAL 3: Grow the number of rental units for all age groups	Townhomes, multi-plexes, apartments, co-housing, ADUs	All price points, focus on moderate to market rate rents	All cities with more needed in the larger cities
GOAL 4: Foster grassroots efforts	All products, especially single-family or attached housing	Varies, moderate market rate preferred for increased risk from less experience	Adjacent to existing infrastructure and infill sites
GOAL 5: Proactively preserve the existing housing stock	All products, especially single-family homes	Focus on homes priced under \$200,000	All cities based on recommendations in Chapter 3
GOAL 6: Maintain Fair Zoning and Regulations	Attached and Multi-family	Various	N/A

Figure 5.3: Implementation Schedule

TOOLS	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Story County Housing Trust Fund	Short/on-going	Cities/County, Non-Profit Developer, Banking Community, Development Group
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Lending Consortium	Medium	Chambers, Banking Community, Trust Fund, Multiple other partners
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Major employers	Short/on-going	Chambers, Employers
G1: Public/Private Partnerships: Realtors, builders and developers	Short/on-going	Realtors, Builders, Cities, County
G1: Non-Profit: Development of a Non-Profit Developer	Long for new organizations	County, Cities, Economic Development Groups
G1: Land Assembly: Development-oriented local landowners to solidify legacy project	On-going as arises	Cities, County, Realtors, Property Owners
G1: Land Assembly: Reuse of surplus public lands or sites	Long	Cities, County
G1: Land Assembly: Assemble infill opportunities	Medium	Cities, County, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G2: Special assessments	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Subordinate payments	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Deferred payment	Project specific	Cities, County
G2: Land Assembly: Direct lot development	Medium	Cities, County, Trust Fund, Non-Profit Developer, Property Owners
G2: Land Assembly: Long-term investment, budget annually	Short	Cities, County
G3: Leverage risk sharing tools with product requirements	Project specific	Cities, County, Banking Community, Trust Fund
G3: Downtown/commercial building reuse	Medium	Cities, Property Owners
G3: Pre-packaged site plans/RFPs: Show what will get approved, reduce soft costs	Medium to Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Builders and Developers
G3: Pre-packaged site plans/RFPs: Product Demonstration	Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G4: Code enforcement, share resources	Medium/on-going	Cities, County
G4: Invest in neighborhood pride	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Groups
G4: Market existing programs: Regular communication notices	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Group, Realtors
G4: New rehab programs for both rental (landlords) and owner	Medium	Cities, County, Trust Fund
G4: Market existing programs: Create a database of all programs	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Other partners
G5: Housing advocates	Short/on-going	Cities, County, Economic Development Groups, Chambers, Residents
G5: Recruitment, skilled trades "residency"	Long	Chambers, Economic Development Groups
G5: Pre-packaged site plans and RFPs	Medium to Long	Cities, County, Banking Community, Non-Profit Developer, Trust Fund
G6: Update land use plans	Medium	Cities, County
G6: Broaden residential permitted uses under certain contexts and design standards	Short	Cities, County, Builders and Developers
G6: Evaluate reductions in lot sizes, setbacks	Short	Cities, County, Builders and Developers

APPENDIX

COMMUNITY SURVEY - FULL RESULTS

Q1: What is your home zip code?

Answered: 673 Skipped: 2

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
50010	14.56%	98
50011	0.00%	0
50012	0.00%	0
50013	0.00%	0
50014	10.70%	72
50046	0.59%	4
50055	5.65%	38
50056	7.73%	52
50105	4.46%	30
50124	4.31%	29
50134	0.15%	1
50154	0.59%	4
50161	4.01%	27
50201	21.10%	142
50236	9.21%	62
50244	0.45%	3
50248	11.00%	74
50278	3.12%	21
Other (please specify)	2.38%	16
TOTAL		673

Q3: Do you believe that the current housing supply adequately meets the needs of the following household types in your county?

Answered: 591 Skipped: 84

	YES	NO	TOTAL
"Empty-nesters" - retirees or couples with no children living at home	61% 344	39% 223	567
Students	61% 340	39% 214	554
Young couples without children	58% 326	42% 234	560
Single professionals	50% 282	50% 282	564
Elderly singles or couples	47% 266	53% 298	564
Families with children	47% 265	53% 298	563
Multi-generational families	31% 170	69% 375	545
Seasonal Workers	28% 147	72% 378	525

Do you think the following housing products would be successful in Story County today?

Q4: Affordable, small two- or three-bedroom house

Answered: 574 Skipped: 101

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	91.29%	524
No	8.71%	50
TOTAL		574

Q5: Mid-size, three-bedroom house

Answered: 573 Skipped: 102

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.92%	521
No	9.08%	52
TOTAL		573

Q6: Larger home with four or more bedrooms

Answered: 564 Skipped: 111

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.19%	300
No	46.81%	264
TOTAL		564

Q7: Large Lot Residential Housing

Answered: 562 Skipped: 113

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	65.84%	370
No	34.16%	192
TOTAL		562

Q8: Townhouse or Duplex

Answered: 571 Skipped: 104

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.89%	479
No	16.11%	92
TOTAL		571

Q9: Row Housing

Answered: 565 Skipped: 110

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.27%	301
No	46.73%	264
TOTAL		565

Q10: Apartment

Answered: 565 Skipped: 110

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	66.02%	373
No	33.98%	192
TOTAL		565

Q11: Downtown upper-story residential

Answered: 562 Skipped: 113

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.57%	346
No	38.43%	216
TOTAL		562

Q12: Independent - Senior Living Housing

Answered: 568 Skipped: 107

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	83.63%	475
No	16.37%	93
TOTAL		568

Q13: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU, also known as "granny flats")

Answered: 562 Skipped: 113

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	63.35%	356
No	36.65%	206
TOTAL		562

Q14: What type of housing do you believe area seniors and the elderly are most interested in?

Answered: 531 Skipped: 144

	NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	INTERESTED	MOST INTERESTED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
An apartment with additional services available (for example: one meal a day, housekeeping, etc.)	5% 25	20% 102	51% 266	24% 126	519	2.95
An owner-occupied home with shared maintenance.	7% 35	25% 129	48% 249	20% 106	519	2.82
An assisted living unit.	7% 38	27% 141	51% 264	14% 72	515	2.72
A small independent owner-occupied home.	6% 33	33% 174	49% 260	11% 59	526	2.66
A residence that is attached or adjacent to the home of a family member.	11% 55	30% 158	42% 218	17% 89	520	2.66
An independent apartment.	8% 43	30% 157	52% 272	9% 49	521	2.63

Q15: How would you rate the supply of buildable lots in your community?

Answered: 538 Skipped: 137

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than \$15,000	3.76% 20
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6.02% 32
\$25,000 - \$49,999	16.54% 88
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.05% 96
\$75,000 - \$99,999	20.30% 108
\$100,000 - \$149,999	23.31% 124
\$150,000 or more	12.03% 64
TOTAL	532

Q16: What is your household's estimated annual income?

Answered: 532 Skipped: 143

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than \$15,000	3.76% 20
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6.02% 32
\$25,000 - \$49,999	16.54% 88
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.05% 96
\$75,000 - \$99,999	20.30% 108
\$100,000 - \$149,999	23.31% 124
\$150,000 or more	12.03% 64
TOTAL	532

Q17: How much is your monthly rent or mortgage payment?

Answered: 534 Skipped: 141

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Paid off mortgage/living rent free	17.60% 94
Under \$500	4.12% 22
\$500 - \$999	37.45% 200
\$1,000 - \$1,499	26.59% 142
\$1,500 - \$1,999	9.74% 52
\$2,000 - \$2,999	3.93% 21
Over \$3,000	0.56% 3
TOTAL	534

Q19: Is there any reason you'd look for a new place to live in the next three years? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 530 Skipped: 145

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
To up-size to a larger owner-occupied home	22.08% 117
To up-size to a larger rental unit	5.28% 28
To move out of a rental to purchase a home	8.49% 45
To down-size to a smaller owner-occupied home	13.77% 73
To down-size to a smaller rental unit	2.45% 13
To move into an assisted living facility	1.70% 9
Moving to a different community for quality of life reasons	16.98% 90
None - I am happy with my current living arrangement	46.79% 248
Other (please specify)	13.21% 70
Total Respondents: 530	

Q20: In the past three years did you look for a new place to live, regardless of where?

Answered: 528 Skipped: 147

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I looked to purchase a home	39.96% 211
I looked for a rental unit	11.17% 59
I did not look for housing	48.86% 258
TOTAL	528

Q18: How much do you think your community needs to invest in your community for each of the following price categories? Skip if this does not apply to you.

Answered: 208 Skipped: 467

	OVERSUPPLY	BALANCE BETWEEN SUPPLY AND DEMAND	UNDERSUPPLY	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Under \$100,000	1% 2	11% 21	72% 141	16% 31	195
\$100,000 - \$149,999	3% 6	18% 35	68% 136	12% 23	200
\$150,000 - \$199,999	9% 18	30% 60	53% 105	9% 17	200
\$200,000 - \$300,000	27% 53	34% 67	28% 57	12% 23	200
Over \$300,000	39% 78	27% 53	15% 30	20% 39	200

Q18: How much do you think your community needs to invest in your community for the following rental ranges? Skip if this does not apply to you.

Answered: 54 Skipped: 621

	OVERSUPPLY	BALANCE BETWEEN SUPPLY AND DEMAND	UNDERSUPPLY	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Under \$500	0% 0	0% 0	89% 47	11% 6	53
\$500 - \$999	4% 2	31% 17	61% 33	4% 2	54
\$1,000 - \$1,499	46% 25	24% 13	9% 5	20% 11	54
\$1,500 - \$1,999	51% 27	11% 6	6% 3	32% 17	53
Over \$2,000	39% 21	6% 3	6% 3	50% 27	54

Q18: How much do you think your community needs to invest in your community for the following rental ranges? Skip if this does not apply to you.

Answered: 500 Skipped: 175

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	55.80% 279
No	44.20% 221
TOTAL	500

Q18: How much do you think your community needs to invest in your community for the following rental ranges? Skip if this does not apply to you.

Answered: 500 Skipped: 175

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	81.20% 406
No	18.80% 94
TOTAL	500

households, among other restrictions to ensure proper use of funds.

Answered: 497 Skipped: 178

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	81.89%	407
No	18.11%	90
TOTAL		497

your community, how would you rate the impact of each one on the attractiveness of your community?

Answered: 502 Skipped: 173

	HIGHLY POSITIVE	SOMEWHAT POSITIVE	NEUTRAL	SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE	VERY NEGATIVE	UNSURE	TOTAL
K-12 Schools	54.42% 271	25.50% 127	10.84% 54	3.41% 17	0.80% 4	5.02% 25	498
Parks and Recreational Facilities	33.33% 167	41.32% 207	15.97% 80	6.19% 31	2.40% 12	0.80% 4	501
Convenience to Jobs	30.80% 154	39.80% 199	16.80% 84	7.20% 36	3.60% 18	1.80% 9	500
County Safety and Security	27.45% 137	43.66% 218	16.83% 84	8.82% 44	1.00% 5	2.20% 11	499
Community and Cultural Facilities and Churches	24.75% 124	36.73% 184	22.36% 112	10.58% 53	1.60% 8	3.99% 20	501
Health Care Facilities	21.77% 108	35.48% 176	23.79% 118	11.48% 57	4.64% 23	2.82% 14	496
Quality of Public Services	21.37% 106	44.15% 219	21.17% 105	8.47% 42	1.61% 8	3.23% 16	496
Attractive Physical Environment (streets, buildings, landscaping, etc)	20.28% 101	37.95% 189	23.90% 119	14.26% 71	2.81% 14	0.80% 4	498
Historic Resale Value of Houses	16.30% 81	35.61% 177	28.57% 142	7.44% 37	1.61% 8	10.46% 52	497
Convenience to Transportation Facilities	15.06% 75	21.69% 108	24.50% 122	18.07% 90	15.06% 75	5.62% 28	498
Nearby Shopping	11.42% 57	40.28% 201	21.84% 109	17.23% 86	8.82% 44	0.40% 2	499
Affordability of Housing	11.24% 56	21.08% 105	24.30% 121	25.50% 127	15.66% 78	2.21% 11	498
The local property tax rate	8.67% 43	16.94% 84	30.85% 153	23.39% 116	12.50% 62	7.66% 38	496

Q27: Which types of housing solutions would you support to reduce the cost of housing in your county (select all that apply)?

Answered: 479 Skipped: 196

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Downpayment assistance to owners	61% 290
Housing rehabilitation loans	55% 263
Duplex or townhome construction	48% 230
Mortgage assistance	47% 227
Public acquisition of dilapidated properties	45% 215
Grants or low-interest loans to housing developments	43% 204
Public development of infrastructure	36% 174
Premanufactured or modular housing (not mobile homes)	35% 166
Construction financing assistance to builders	26% 126
Higher density or "cluster" development housing	23% 110
Section 8 rental subsidies	22% 107
Other (please specify)	4% 21
Total Respondents: 479	

Q30: What is your age?

Answered: 495 Skipped: 180

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
17 and Under	0.00% 0
18-29	12.73% 63
30-44	36.57% 181
45-59	29.09% 144
60+	21.62% 107
TOTAL	495

Q31: Do you own or rent your home?

Answered: 496 Skipped: 179

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Own	80% 396
Rent	18% 89
Rent-to-Own	1% 4
Live with parents (for rent or free)	1% 6
Live with grown children (for rent or free)	0% 1
TOTAL	496

Q32: How many people live in your household?

Answered: 497 Skipped: 178

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
1	14.29% 71
2-3	52.52% 261
4-6	32.60% 162
7+	0.60% 3
TOTAL	497

Q33: What is your race?

Answered: 489 Skipped: 186

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
White or Caucasian	91% 444
Black or African American	2% 9
American Indian or Alaska Native	0% 1
Asian or Asian American	0% 1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0% 0
Another race	0% 1
Two or more races	2% 8
Prefer not to say	5% 25
TOTAL	489

Q34: Are you Hispanic or Latino

Answered: 481 Skipped: 194

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	1.66% 8
No	98.34% 473
TOTAL	481

Open Ended Comments

- › Need more new homes that are smaller and affordable
- › People with disabilities: currently inadequate accessibility
- › Low income housing more places need to offer as CIRHA could do a virtual workshop as to benefits of renting to more low income
- › Low income-no
- › Single family households - no
- › Available, yes; but affordable, not so much
- › Need more affordable wheelchair accessible living
- › Single-parent families; households below 60% of LMI
- › Low SES families with low-skilled retail or hospitality-related incomes. (No)
- › Accessible housing for those with mobility issues is severely limited
- › The homeless - no
- › Ames belongs to ISU and rental companies. Regular people are disregarded.
- › I don't know. We have what WE need.
- › Need more new homes that are smaller and affordable
- › People with disabilities: currently inadequate accessibility
- › Affordable housing is a must. And not run down, smelly, or ugly
- › We need a 1 bedroom low income housing available to single people as well
- › Low income housing
- › I haven't looked in the last three years
- › Housing that is located outside of normal bus routes is useless to most seniors
- › I think there is a market for homes in the 100,000- 150,000 price range. Why are there so many homes priced over 200,000? I'm not interested in being house poor
- › Ames is a great town, but I am disappointed in the cost of homes here, for what you get! I'd sure like to see more options for Baby Boomer types, with aging-at-home features and environmental awareness being the new trend
- › Seems to be not many options for affordable homes for young adults. Personally went with a manufactured home as a starter home and holding it to use as a down payment in future. Though this may not be for everyone
- › There is an extreme shortage of home 400,000 to 500,000
- › Homes under \$200,000 get sold so fast they are barely on the market making them hard to find. Ranch style homes , one story , are the hardest to find. These are in high demand, due to older people needing one floor (no stairs)
- › Trying to buy a house in Ames on regular people money is impossible. The only reason I have a house is I bought it from family. Again, Ames is run by rental agencies and elected officials that have no idea what it's like to live on 30k a year
- › Housing for students living off-campus is either too expensive for graduate student salaries or is of too low a quality for me to move my family here with me
- › Affordable lots are incredibly scarce, county taxes are too high
- › "I am single person and I think I should not be discriminated against if I want to look for 2 bedroom and 1 bedrooms are not as easily to get into with amenities I am looking for
- › undersupply of lower priced rental housing that is non-student and family oriented
- › My experience I have looked at 10 apartments. It has been very frustrating and overwhelming. I have ran into the issue of low income housing is under supply and have been on waiting list at multiple locations for the past couple of months. There was a opening the other day I was called about but several people had been on the waiting list and interested as well. Things to put in consideration is price, location, accessibility and parking especially if you choose to live downtown
- › Many rentals are more expensive than should be
- › Better law enforcement services desperately needed in southern Story County. Also there is a need for available lots on which to build. A preliminary plat has been submitted for a new development on the northeast part of town, but that has stalled
- › Need for low income housing
- › The market seems designed to maximize rental income from student renters with limitless resources, at least in my zip code. I do not feel that adequate protections are in place for renters facing challenges from fixed incomes or loss of income as a result of retirement or illness
- › I live in rural Maxwell and we really need build able lots in our area and for a developer to develop the lots that we have on the north end of town. It would also be nice to see places both in town and in the rural areas to have to keep properties more clean

- › "More affordable housing is needed. Someone needs to tap into the market of homes under \$150,000. Just nice decent homes not fancy ones
- › I am ready to get back to normal. Open up our business, schools and events
- › I think if a place that provides low income housing should accept us regardless
- › There seems to be lots of housing available but just out of reach for young professionals just starting out. Buying a home is not feasible as the cost of living in Ames is significantly higher than surrounding areas. The quality of some rental houses are abysmal. To me, some of the rental houses are not worth the price especially when no utilities are included in that price. It's hard to find something in the middle
- › Desperately need more housing that accepts section 8 vouchers
- › I live in Ames now and I know this is about county housing, but I wanted to provide my input regardless because Ames is overpriced, as are many other desirable communities. I'd love to see more housing here geared to retirees and alumni who want to "rightsize" their lives and not be saddled with too much stuff or too much housework or property. I am seeing builders slowly making this shift and it is very attractive to me to be able to stay in Ames, support the Cyclones and support my local businesses. If you build it, they will come, or in my case, stay! Thank you for the opportunity to chat
- › "CIRHA approved housing is minimal and unattainable for many low income families. Their are a LOT of ""slumlords"" and rentals not up to code and penalties so families, low income/ poverty, living in unsafe, small environments
- › Housing costs too high to low income workers
- › I love Story County. It's been my home since coming to College in Ames in the late 80s. But when we moved from rural Story county to Huxley two years ago I was, and am continued to be, SHOCKED by the property tax rates. And they went up by another huge sum this year. Even though our house will be paid off, I'm not at all sure we'll be able to afford to continue to live here after retirement
- › I believe that we should look at improving public transportation options throughout the county, which would contribute to improving housing options for low- and moderate-income people in Story County
- › Allowing overbuilding of rental apartments in Ames was a mistake
- › Need more new homes that are smaller and affordable
- › People with disabilities: currently inadequate accessibility
- › To find a decent apartment with lower rent is impossible esp. for older people with a fixed income
- › I think we have far too many student apartments and not enough lower income opportunities
- › There is a lack of quality affordable housing for people who do not make a lot of money
- › Need to lower the price. I costs too much to buy a house here
- › I don't understand how some of the things on the list would help bring down housing prices in Story County. I feel that Ames, at least, has artificially high prices and that problem would have to be addressed with regulation as well as the solutions presented here
- › No larger lots available
- › Why was Colo excluded in the survey? Housing is too expensive, lack of available lots for building, the smaller communities except Story City and Nevada lack the basics, i.e., grocery stores, hardware stores, a mechanic, etc.; driving around these communities I see very few people and it appears that people lack the interest or funds in maintaining their properties. Young people with college educations are moving to larger metro areas around the country. Young people with vocational degrees are choosing to live in larger areas where there will be work. I see more areas where farm homes/buildings are torn down and become fields thus removing available housing. Where they used to be four farm families per square mile now there are no homes. If you have car trouble - even a flat tire - in rural Story County (or Iowa) you're in trouble
- › We have overbuilt apartments - we need more moderate housing stock for families
- › Affordable and good housing is lacking in Ames; Especially for families and people on minimum wage, on disability or on a type of assistance
- › The data is already out there as far as housing affordability. What people think is irrelevant in as much as what the need is, seriously. It's there. Income and unemployment versus rent and housing stock availability equal homelessness. Like Nike said, just do it
- › Need affordable single person housing of 2 bedrooms
- › Housing in Story County has always been overpriced due to the college. It's hard for the middle class to have a nice decent sized home. There is also limited housing for poor/homeless. Story County should look into tiny home parks for students and homeless individuals to ensure they're housed

- › "No more apartment buildings unless they are actually affordable (that household income affordability chart was not realistic). Focus on rehab of old apartment complexes rather than new builds. Quit with the ""luxury"" apartment models marketed to students - it only makes them go more in debt and sets them up for failure later because they can't afford to service their debt. Ames should in NO way be in the top 10 in the US for hosting costs. It's deplorable
- › Also, there seems to be ZERO standard for stand-alone, single dwelling rentals. It feeds into income inequality in our county. There are a MULTITUDE of slummed rental blocks that are poorly regulated. Hold those owners to a higher standard and it may actually help alleviate other problems by making more affordable housing more available
- › Too much student housing and not enough for low income seniors and others
- › A large number of Ames residents are employed by Iowa State University; ISU wages have gone up by 0-1% the last few years, while rents have gone up at significantly higher rates. Rent inflation is a major problem. Additionally, landlords often require tenants to renew their leases as early as January for the following August, which is absurd. Landlords should allow month-to-month leases (i.e., one month's notice from the tenant before move-out) AFTER the first year of the lease
- › There needs to be more affordable homes/apartments for those who do not want roommates
- › Pave more gravel roads with high traffic loads, stop letting big agriculture control town/city borders
- › Get \$\$ to people not developers
- › Affordable housing needs to be defined and used throughout any discussion on housing - it should be defined as 30% (OR LESS) of a persons annual income. If we can continue to use the term affordable housing without a clear understanding of what we are referring to, it is a meaningless statement. Affordable housing without a clear definition is totally different if you are a single parent working with children in day care, than if you are a two-parent household with a spouse bringing in over \$350K with no child care expenses
- › There needs to be more low incoming housing. Tons of apartments are being built, but no one can afford them except students/professionals (not really sure if they can-- I never could; had to have a roommate). If I work a decent income can't afford a place, how do people with half the income that I do afford it? This is typically the income people with disabilities are working with. I think what makes me the most mad too is that there are older buildings in town that no one wants to rent because they aren't as nice, yet they won't accept Section 8 help, or they are still too expensive for our low income population
- › There are not enough affordable homes for sale for young professionals just starting out
- › "Need more homes that people can afford....there seems to be a lot of high dollar homes recently and some are more than the Ames area...
- › There are simply not enough affordable apartments/homes for rent for single students not looking to share spaces with other students/nonstudents. Rent should not be affordable only because you share a home with 3+ other people. This is a college town. Affordable housing should be in abundance here
- › Housing costs are very high. Need smaller houses available to lower costs
- › Was looking to purchase a house for my elderly mother close to where I live but couldn't find anything affordable. BTW affordable to us is under \$150,000.
- › Ames is overpriced for small houses, luxury houses are outside of my price range and so are the small ones
- › We have been looking to buy a 4 bedroom house in story county for over a year. We found our dream house last August. We did the numbers we could afford the mortgage but .. we could not afford the over \$7,000 property taxes with a mortgage. We had to let our dream house slip through our fingers all because of property taxes. We are now looking at houses outside of Story County
- › We were looking to spend around \$250,000 +/- to purchase a family acreage and could not find one in Story County that would work for us
- › Homes were overpriced for the amount of updating they required
- › Houses were going very quickly in our price range and it made it hard to even know what to do or how to make a decision
- › Housing is not affordable in Story County especially as a single income
- › It is really hard to find something affordable and good quality. When homes are under \$250,000 it seems like they need lots of work, which isn't what I need with a toddler in the house
- › The best way to help with affordable housing is to increase supply. This includes lots, allowing higher density, flexible zoning. Population is growing and simply need more housing in all price points

- › Housing assistance is available to low income families already, it is the lower middle class that do not meet that cut off that end up homeless. Providing home loans, at an affordable interest rate, to those with poor credit, on a graduated repayment scale, 40 years versus 30, whatever, to make housing affordable.
- › Better communication to the public as to why property taxes are so high in Story County.
- › Loans or grants on upkeep/ maintenance of residences
- › Repair degraded roads. Loan assistance for people wanting to build, not just the contractors
- › Tougher rental standards (outside of Ames) so less "slumlords"
- › Enforcing and enhancing nuisance laws
- › Flood zone regulations or assistance to remove the Class A from certain properties
- › Commitment to protecting renters during the covid-19 pandemic
- › Allowing acreages to be split more easily for building and lower county taxes
- › How about funding assistance doe those of us working. Why do the low income always get the breaks?
- › Slum lords on low income housing that do not fix property on section 8 housing and raking in the benefits and taking money without fixing anything
- › Stop building so many apartment buildings
- › I would like to see more affordable new construction home options
- › Encouraging builders to use universal design. One bedroom and bathroom on a main floor
- › Assist elderly home owners
- › There needs to be higher standards for quality construction, instead of cutting corners and building housing structures for speed instead of quality. Many of the new rental structures are thrown together and are not structurally sound
- › Section 8 is another handy tool to abuse poor people if that's what you're into. A wild thought is to actually have homes people can afford and limit the number of those disgusting human ant hill apartment complexes that keep springing up
- › Please quit looking for ways to increase my property taxes
- › I would like to see more places like The Roosevelt
- › There is a glut of apartments. They are ugly and take up space. Especially the Bricktowne ones, they look like a prison. Not exactly a welcoming site when I drive into our community. We need more affordable, single family homes and less apartments
- › More townhomes (under \$200,000) for single people who want to own. More affordable rentals for people who are not students
- › Housing in Story County, Ames in particular is out of the range for a lot of workers. We need to raise the minimum wage or lower rental rates
- › Smaller communities outside of Ames need help. Not everyone wants to live there
- › Like to see each Story County community build a minimum number of new homes each year. We need properties to turn to create opportunities for new buyers. As families have rediscovered the outdoors, like to see more green space, especially in our smaller markets as a draw to bring families there. Developments of Granny Flats would be nice for elderly who want something small and on one level. Basements not as important for that demographic
- › How is the county/state to subsidize the hundreds of septic systems (many working just fine) that will need to be dug up? Are the board of supervisors looking for problems where problems do not exist? Perhaps attention could be given to the numerous bridges on gravel roads that are obvious safety risks...
- › Public transportation isn't available in rural Story County (bus) where housing is more affordable. It seems that running a bus to those areas a few times a day should be considered for cost effectiveness (even a van?). I know the HIRTA bus has gone to pick individuals up. If a lower income housing unit could be built in one of these outer communities it could help the community with school enrollment numbers (instead of continuing to add to the over population issues in Ames), add growth to Story County as a whole, and possibly add some business opportunities for shops to expand (again reducing congestion to Ames, and providing jobs in my community)
- › I love Ames because it has a great bus system, great parks and great people. But I can't afford to live in my dream home in Ames. Now I am looking to move somewhere else because even if I do find another house that I love ... I know that our family can't afford to live in Ames or story county anymore
- › Oversupply in Ames for apartments, too low inventory of single family housing. Just the opposite in small communities surrounding. They need more affordable non single family home housing options
- › Roland is a nice small town in but there is no more options for people to build. They need to develop more residential lots to bring additional people
- › Stop building \$200,000 plus homes hard to find starter homes

- › I would love to see more quality housing in Colo but there are no businesses other than Casey's to support more people
- › The trailer parks are depressing. The lots are full of stuff and often junk, and the trailers are not in very good condition. These residents pay huge lot fees and the trailer parks are pretty crappy and unsafe
- › Need grocery store ,restaurant,convenient store and affordable housing in the Collins, Iowa area
- › I have struggled to find 3 bedroom options for my family. I have been looking for 2 years and feel stuck in a 2 bedroom. I would like to stay in Nevada but it's not looking like a great option
- › Home prices are high and there are very few available rentals that do not take 40%+ of income
- › The City of Zearing is full. We have little to no housing, rental or purchase opportunities. Our town could easily support additional housing growth. People want to move here but there is nothing available. More development is needed for housing in Zearing
- › Some of the roads in Maxwell need to be leveled and smoothed. I have to weave and dodge so my vehicle is not damaged
- › I would like to see these apartment complexes have to answer to someone about snow removal as hard when you have appointments and you are disabled and when you call the people in charge they either don't answer or rude and tell you if you don't like it get out after 10 years of living there and taking good care of the place and no one can help
- › Housing is very expensive for the single income person and quality of rental housing upkeep/satisfaction goes down severely with the more affordable rentals
- › Promoting variety of housing types, higher-density and more transportation options would be an improvement
- › Independent senior housing is way too expensive for the low - mid income seniors to even think about. There needs to be a way to provide for aging population. Maybe an affordable monthly rent, such as apartments would be. One level with no steps and handicap accessible is so very important and so difficult to find
- › I have lived in Story County all my life. It is a good place to live but I feel like there are a lot of very poor people here and there is not a lot of great housing at any price. A lot of run down houses and eyesores in many of our communities. We think Ankeny is much nicer and one can get much more house for the money. We will probably move there now that our kids have all graduated even though we work here
- › Don't need cheap housing. Need more larger lots. Property taxes are high
- › There is a significant need for lots and new housing
- › I would love to see more pride of ownership and incentives to foster that
- › There's no way to get ahead for low income families so many continue generational poverty. There should be a way for the local government to help those who qualify buy a home ex Habitat for Humanity programs but at a local level
- › I don't think its right you have to buy 40 acres if you wasn't to build a place in country. Why not be able to purchase like 2 from a farmer to build?
- › There is not much available for working single adults who would like to purchase a home. Many need to live in Ankeny and work in Ames due to more affordable housing for single adults
- › There are not enough acreage available for rural families to build on. Most are becoming farm land by demolishing all trees and wildlife without an option of first developing it and preserving the land as it is
- › I believe that Story County needs more landlord participation in supportive housing options for homeless and at-risk populations, in collaboration with housing service providers
- › Need of townhomes without steps to enter
- › I think housing in story county has seen a shift to wipe clean and build a apartment building. We have a amazing supply of historic homes with great character and size, two things the younger generations want. We need to help incentivize purchasing these older homes and rehabilitating them. This is better for all parties as it helps keep the character of our communities while bringing young generation to town and putting them in a home they become attached to. New housing is important but rural gentrification is not what any of us want in our communities and it appears to be shifting that way
- › We've been trying to get a loan for a house I disabled do to a car accident and because of car accident my credit was shot. Now I getting my credit it up I can get a loan because I'm on disability and my fiance has no credit. We want a house in a year were doing everything we can and it's just not getting us anywhere it seems
- › Myself and many of my coworkers commute into Story County because of affordability. Because of that, I also struggle to participate in activities and events in Story County that would benefit me in my professional role, but my commute just doesn't make it feasible